

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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Two very welcome articles; but we are very sorry that there is no space for the considerable variety which we had prepared, and which must go over. The cause of this is, that our good friends Messrs. *Harper & Brothers* have again undertaken to jostle us out of the market just at the end of the story we have been publishing so long; having obtained early sheets of the last part of the work, and printed the whole separately. So we have to finish the Claverings sooner than we should have done, had we regularly reprinted the tale as it shall come out in the *Cornhill Magazine*.

This conduct of the GREAT PUBLISHERS is a violation of the courtesy of the Trade; and is the worse, because, as in former cases, we offered them our Stereotype plates at the manufacturers' price. By accepting this offer, they would have had more than all the advantages they now have, and we should have received back again the money we have expended.

How does this conduct differ from setting your neighbor's house on fire? Simply in this: *that* would be *against Human Law*. And yet we do *not* think Messrs. Harpers belong to what Burns thinks the small class "who have no check but human law." They do not see their conduct "as others see it." They have so good an appetite, and so strong arms, that they eat more than Christian politeness warrants.

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ALL HERE.

BY O. W. HOLMES.

1829-1867.

It is not what we say or sing,
That keeps our charm so long unbroken,
Though every lightest leaf we bring
May touch the heart as friendship's token;
Not what we sing or what we say
Can make us dearer each to other —
We love the singer and his lay,
But love as well the silent brother!

Yet bring whate'er your garden grows,
Thrice welcome to our smiles and praises;
Thanks for the myrtle and the rose,
Thanks for the marigolds and daisies;
One flower erelong we all shall claim,
Alas! unloved of *Amaryllis* —
Nature's last blossom — need I name
The wreath of threescore's silver lilies?

How many, brothers, meet to-night
Around our boyhood's covered embers?
Go read the treasured names aright
The old triennial list remembers:
Though twenty wear the starry sign
That tells a life has broke its tether,
The fifty-eight of 'twenty-nine —
God bless **THE BOYS!** — are all together!

These come with joyous look and word,
With friendly grasp and cheerful greeting —
Those smile unseen, and move unheard,
The angel guests of every meeting;
They cast no shadow in the flame
That flushes from the gilded lustre,
But count us — we are still the same;
One earthly band, one heavenly cluster!

Love dies not when he bows his head
To pass beyond the narrow portals —
The light these glowing moments shed
Wakes from their sleep our lost immortals;
They come as in their joyous prime,
Before their morning days were numbered —
Death stays the envious hand of Time —
The eyes have not grown dim that slumbered!

The paths that loving souls have trod
Arch o'er the dust where worldlings grovel
High as the zenith o'er the sod —
The cross above the sexton's shovel!
We rise beyond the realms of day;
They seem to stoop from spheres of glory
With us one happy hour to stray,
While youth comes back in song and story.

Ah! ours is friendship true as steel
That war has tried in edge and temper;
It writes upon its sacred seal
The priest's *ubique* — *omnes* — *semper*!
It lends the sky a fairer sun
That cheers our lives with rays as steady
As if our footsteps had begun
To print the golden streets already!

The tangling years have clenched its knot
Too fast for mortal strength to sunder —
The lightning bolts of noon are shot —
No fear of evening's idle thunder!
Too late! too late! — no graceless hand
Shall stretch its cords in vain endeavor
To rive the close encircling band
That made and keeps us one forever!

So when upon the fatal scroll
The falling stars have all descended,
And, blotted from the breathing roll,
Our little page of life is ended,
We ask but one memorial line
Traced on thy tablet, Gracious Mother:
"My children. Boys of 'twenty-nine.
In pace. How they loved each other!"
— *Atlantic Monthly.*

THE MEDICAL WARBLER.

ILL is the wind good that no one doth blow,
Taking mankind altogether.
Hail to that wind which blows hard frost and
snow,
Medico-surgical weather!
Prospects of many a bill and a fee,
Suscitate pleasing reflections;
Ills blown to others are good blown to me,
Namely, thoracic affections;

Air-tubes, disorders of, also; catarrh,
Cough, influenza, bronchitis.
Peripneumonia's gainful: so are
Phthisis, dyspnoea, pleuritis.
Numerous patients, moreover, accrue,
Just now, from those inflammations,
Which, a peculiar diathesis through,
Seize on the articulations,

Nerves, muscles, tendons; rheumatic attacks,
Cases, no end, of lumbago,
And of the hip that sciatica racks:
Down in my visit-book they go.
Oft with a good dislocation I meet,
Oft with good fractures, from tumbles
Caused by the slides on the slippery street:
Thanks to the boys and the Bumbles.

Thence too, do cuts and contusions occur.
'Gainst all those frequent disasters,
Soon as comes frost, with my splints I'm astir,
Bandages, pads, lint, and plasters.
Gay as a lark in the season of spring,
Soaring aloft in full feather;
Whilst for a call on the look-out, I sing —
Jolly professional weather!

— *Punch.*

front door. "Yes—open wide," said Sophie, who, when anger came upon her, was apt to drop into a mode of speaking English which she was able to avoid in her cooler moments. "Sir 'Oo, I am going to walk, and you shall hear of my walking."

"Am I to take that as a threat?" said he.

"Not a tret at all," said she; "only a promise. Ah! I am good to keep my promises. Yes, I make a promise. Your poor wife—down with the daisies; I know all, and she shall hear too. That is another promise. And your brother, the captain. Oh! here he is, and the little man out of Warwickshire." She had got up from her chair, and had moved toward the door with the intention of going, but just as she was passing out into the hall she encountered Archie and Doodles. Sir Hugh, who had been altogether at a loss to understand what she had meant by the man out of Warwickshire, followed her into the hall, and became more angry than before at finding that his brother had brought a friend to his house at so very inopportune a moment. The wrath in his face was so plainly expressed that Doodles could perceive it, and wished himself away. The presence also of the Spy was not pleasant to the gallant captain. Was the wonderful woman ubiquitous, that he should thus encounter her again, and that so soon after all the things that he had spoken of her on this morning? "How do you do, gentlemen?" said Sophie. "There is a great many boxes here, and I with my crinoline have not got room." Then she shook hands, first with Archie, and then with Doodles; and asked the latter why he was not as yet gone to Warwickshire. Archie, in almost mortal fear, looked up into his brother's face. Had his brother learned the story of that seventy pounds? Sir Hugh was puzzled beyond measure at finding that the woman knew the two men; but, having still an eye to his lamb chops, was chiefly anxious to get rid of Sophie and Doodles together.

"This is my friend Boodle—Captain Boodle," said Archie, trying to put a bold face upon the crisis. "He has come to see me off."

"Very kind of him," said Sir Hugh. "Just make way for this lady, will you? I want to get her out of the house if I can. Your friend seems to know her; perhaps he'll be good enough to give her his arm?"

"Who—I?" said Doodles. "No, I don't know her particularly. I did meet her once before, just once—in a casual way."

"Captain Boodle and me is very good friends," said Sophie. "He come to my house and behave himself very well; only he is not so handy a man as your brother, Sir 'Oo."

Archie trembled, and he trembled still more when his brother, turning to him, asked him if he knew the woman.

"Yes, he know the woman very well," said Sophie. "Why do you not come any more to see me? You send your little friend, but I like you better yourself. You come again when you return, and all that shall be made right."

But still she did not go. She had now seated herself on a gun-case which was resting on a portmanteau, and seemed to be at her ease. The time was going fast, and Sir Hugh, if he meant to eat his chops, must eat them at once.

"See her out of the hall, into the street," he said to Archie; "and if she gives trouble, send for the police. She has come here to get money from me by threats, and only that we have no time, I would have her taken to the lock-up house at once." Then Sir Hugh retreated into the dining-room and shut the door.

"Lock-up-cuse!" said Sophie, scornfully.

"What is dat?"

"He means a prison," said Doodles.

"Prison! I know who is most likely to be in a prison. Tell me of a prison! Is he a minister of state that he can send out order for me to be made prisoner? Is there let-tres de cachet now in England? I think not. Prison, indeed!"

"But really, Madame Gordeloup, you had better go—you had, indeed," said Archie.

"You too—you bid me go? Did I bid you go when you came to me? Did I not tell you sit down? Was I not polite? Did I send for a police, or talk of lock-up-cuse to you? No. It is English that do these things—only English."

Archie felt that it was incumbent on him to explain that his visit to her house had been made under other circumstances—that he had brought money instead of seeking it; and had, in fact, gone to her simply in the way of her own trade. He did begin some preliminaries to this explanation; but as the servant was there, and as his brother might come out from the dining-room, and as also he was aware that he could hardly tell the story much to his own advantage, he stopped abruptly, and, looking piteously at Doodles, implored him to take the lady away.

"Perhaps you wouldn't mind just seeing her into Mount Street," said Archie.

"Who—I?" said Doodles, electrified.

"It is only just round the corner," said Archie.

"Yes, Captain Boodle, we will go," said Sophie. "This is a bad house; and your Sir 'Oo—I do not like him at all. Lock-up, indeed! I tell you he shall very soon be locked up himself. There is what you call Davy's locker. I know—yes."

Doodles also trembled when he heard this anathema, and (thought once more of the character of Jack Stuart and his yacht.

"Pray go with her," said Archie.

"But I had come to see you off."

"Never mind," said Archie. "He is in such a taking, you know. God bless you, old fellow—good-by! I'll write and tell you what fish we get, and mind you tell me what Turriper does for the Bedfordshire. Good-by, Madame Gordeloup; good-by."

There was no escape for him, so Doodles put on his hat and prepared to walk away to Mount Street with the Spy under his arm—the Spy as to whose avocations, over and beyond those of her diplomatic profession, he had such strong suspicions! He felt inclined to be angry with his friend, but the circumstances of his parting hardly admitted of any expression of anger.

"Good-by, Clavvy," he said. "Yes, I'll write—that is, if I've got anything to say."

"Take care of yourself, captain," said Sophie.

"All right," said Archie.

"Mind you come and see me when you come back," said Sophie.

"Of course I will," said Archie.

"And we'll make that all right for you yet. Gentlemen, when they have so much to gain, shouldn't take a no too easy. You come with your handy glove, and we'll see about it again." Then Sophie walked off leaning upon the arm of Captain Boodle, and Archie stood at the door watching them till they turned out of sight round the corner of the Square. At last he saw them no more, and then he returned to his brother.

And as we shall see Doodles no more—or almost no more—we will now bid him adieu civilly. The pair were not ill-matched, though the lady perhaps had some advantage in acuteness, given to her no doubt by the experience of a longer life. Doodles, as he walked along two sides of the square with the fair burden on his arm, felt himself to be in some sort proud of his position, though it was one from which he would not have been sorry to escape, had escape been possible. A remarkable phenomenon was the Spy, and to have walked

round Berkeley Square with such a woman leaning on his arm might in coming years be an event to remember with satisfaction. In the mean time he did not say much to her, and did not quite understand all that she said to him. At last he came to the door which he well remembered, and then he paused. He did not escape even then. After a while the door was opened, and those who were passing might have seen Captain Boodle, slowly and with hesitating steps, enter the narrow passage before the lady. Then Sophie followed, and closed the door behind her. As far as this story goes, what took place at that interview cannot be known. Let us bid farewell to Doodles, and wish him a happy escape.

"How did you come to know that woman?" said Hugh to his brother, as soon as Archie was in the dining-room.

"She was a friend of Julia's," said Archie.

"You haven't given her money?" Hugh asked.

"Oh dear, no," said Archie.

Immediately after that they got into their cab, the things were pitched on the top, and, for a while, we may bid adieu to them also.

CHAPTER XL.

SHOWING HOW MRS. BURTON FOUGHT HER BATTLE.

"FLORENCE, I have been to Bolton Street, and I have seen Lady Ongar." Those were the first words which Cecilia Burton spoke to her sister-in-law, when she found Florence in the drawing-room on her return from the visit which she had made to the countess. Florence had still before her the desk on which she had been writing; and the letter in its envelope, addressed to Mrs. Clavering, but as yet unclosed, was lying beneath her blotting-paper. Florence, who had never dreamed of such an undertaking on Cecilia's part, was astounded at the tidings which she heard. Of course her first effort was made to learn from her sister's tone and countenance what had been the result of this interview; but she could learn nothing from either. There was no radiance as of joy in Mrs. Burton's face, nor was there written there any thing of despair. Her voice was serious and almost solemn, and her manner was very grave, but that was all. "You have seen her?" said Florence, rising up from her chair.

"Yes, dear, I may have done wrong. Theodore, I know, will say so. But I

it thought best to try to learn the truth before you wrote to Mrs. Clavering."

"And what is the truth?" But perhaps you have not learned it."

"I think I have learned all that she could tell me. She has been very frank."

"Well, what is the truth? Do not suppose, dearest, that I cannot bear it. I hope for nothing now. I only want to have this settled, that I may be at rest."

Upon this Mrs. Burton took the suffering girl in her arms and caressed her tenderly. "My love," said she, "it is not easy for us to be at rest. You cannot be at rest as yet."

"I can. I will be so, when I know that this is settled. I do not wish to interfere with his fortune. There is my letter to his mother, and now I will go back to Stratton."

"Not yet, dearest, not yet," said Mrs. Burton, taking the letter in her hand, but refraining from withdrawing it at once from the envelope. "You must hear what I have heard to-day."

Does she say that she loves him?"

"Ah! yes — she loves him. We must not doubt that."

"And he — what does she say of him?"

"She says what you also must say, Florence, though it is hard that it should be so. It must be as he shall decide."

"No," said Florence, withdrawing herself from the arm that was still around her, "no, it shall not be as he may choose to decide. I will not so submit myself to him. It is enough as it is. I will never see him more — never. To say that I do not love him would be untrue, but I will never see him again."

"Stop, dear, stop. What if it be no fault of his?"

"No fault of his that he went to her when we — we — we — he and I — were, as we were, together!"

"Of course there has been some fault; but Flo, dearest, listen to me. You know that I would ask you to do nothing from which a woman should shrink."

"I know that you would give your heart's blood for me; but nothing will be of avail now. Do not look at me with melancholy eyes like that. Cissy, it will not kill me. It is only the doubt that kills one."

"I will not look at you with melancholy eyes, but you must listen to me. She does not herself know what his intention is."

"But I know it, and I know my own. Read my letter, Cissy. There is not one word of anger in it, nor will I ever utter a reproach. He knew her first. If he loved her through it all, it was a pity he could not

be constant to his love, even though she was false to him."

"But you won't hear me, Flo. As far as I can learn the truth — as I myself most firmly believe — when he went to her on her return to England, he had no other intention than that of visiting an old friend."

"But what sort of friend, Cissy?"

"He had no idea then of being untrue to you. But when he saw her the old intimacy came back. That was natural. Then he was dazzled by her beauty."

"Is she then so beautiful?"

"She is very beautiful."

"Let him go to her," said Florence, tearing herself away from her sister's arm, and walking across the room with a quick and almost angry step. "Let her have him. Cissy, there shall be an end of it. I will not condescend to solicit his love. If she is such as you say, and if beauty with him goes for every thing, what chance could there be for such as me?"

"I did not say that beauty with him went for every thing."

"Of course it does. I ought to have known that it would be so with such a one as him. And then she is rich also — wonderfully rich! What right can I have to think of him?"

"Florence, you are unjust. You do not even suspect that it is her money."

"To me it is the same thing. I suppose that a woman who is so beautiful has a right to every thing. I know that I am plain, and I will be — content — in future — to think no more —" Poor Florence, when she had got as far as that, broke down, and could go on no farther with the declaration which she had been about to make as to her future prospects. Mrs. Burton, taking advantage of this, went on with her story, struggling, not altogether unsuccessfully, to assume a calm tone of unimpassioned reason.

"As I said before, he was dazzled —"

"Dazzled! oh!"

"But even then he had no idea of being untrue to you."

"No; he was untrue without an idea. That is worse."

"Florence, you are perverse, and are determined to be unfair. I must beg that you will hear me to the end, so that then you may be able to judge what course you ought to follow." This Mrs. Burton said with an air of great authority; after which she continued in a voice something less stern — "He thought of doing no injury to you when he went to see her; but something of the feeling of his old love grew upon him when he was in her company, and he became embarrassed by

his position before he was aware of his own danger. He might, of course, have been stronger." Here Florence exhibited a gesture of strong impatience, though she did not speak. "I am not going to defend him altogether, but I think you must admit that he was hardly tried. Of course I cannot say what passed between them, but I can understand how easily they might recur to the old scenes—how naturally she would wish for a renewal of the love which she had been base enough to betray! She does not, however, consider herself as at present engaged to him. That you may know for certain. It may be that she has asked him for such a promise, and that he has hesitated. If so, his staying away from us, and his not writing to you, can be easily understood."

"And what is it you would have me do?"

"He is ill now. Wait till he is well. He would have been here before this had not illness prevented him. Wait till he comes."

"I cannot do that, Cissy. Wait I must, but I cannot wait without offering him, through his mother, the freedom which I have so much reason to know that he desires."

"We do not know that he desires it. We do not know that his mother even suspects him of any fault toward you. Now that he is there—at home—away from Bolton Street—"

"I do not care to trust to such influences as that, Cissy. If he could not spend this morning with her in her own house, and then, as he left her, feel that he preferred me to her, and to all the world, I would rather be as I am than take his hand. He shall not marry me from pity, nor yet from a sense of duty. We know the old story—how the Devil would be a monk when he was sick. I will not accept his sick-bed allegiance, or have to think that I owe my husband to a mother's influence over him while he is ill."

"You will make me think, Flo, that you are less true to him than she is."

"Perhaps it is so. Let him have what good such truth as hers can do him. For me, I feel that it is my duty to be true to myself. I will not condescend to indulge my heart at a cost of my pride as a woman."

"Oh, Florence, I hate that word pride."

"You would not hate it for yourself, in my place."

"You need take no shame to love him."

"Have I taken shame to love him?"

said Florence, rising again from her chair. "Have I been misshapen or coy about my love? From the moment in which I knew

that it was a pleasure to myself to regard him as my future husband, I have spoken of my love as being always proud of it. I have acknowledged it as openly as you do yours for Theodore. I acknowledge it still, and will never deny it. Take shame that I have loved him! No. But I should take to myself great shame should I ever be brought so low as to ask him for his love, when once I had learned to think that he had transferred it from myself to another woman." Then she walked the length of the room, backward and forward, with hasty steps, not looking at her sister-in-law, whose eyes were now filled with tears. "Come, Cissy," she then said, "we will make an end of this. Read my letter if you choose to read it—though indeed it is not worth the reading—and then let me send it to the post."

Mrs. Burton now opened the letter and read it very slowly. It was stern and almost unfeeling in the calmness of the words chosen; but in those words her proposed marriage with Harry Clavering was absolutely abandoned. "I know," she said, "that your son is more warmly attached to another lady than he is to me, and under those circumstances, for his sake as well as for mine, it is necessary that we should part. Dear Mrs. Clavering, may I ask you to make him understand that he and I are never to recur to the past? If he will send me [back any letters of mine—should any have been kept—and the little present which I once gave him, all will have been done which need be done, and all have been said which need be said. He will receive in a small parcel his own letters and the gifts which he has made me." There was in this a tone of completeness—as of a business absolutely finished—of a judgment admitting no appeal, which did not at all suit Mrs. Burton's views. A letter, quite as becoming on the part of Florence, might, she thought, be written, which would still leave open a door for reconciliation. But Florence was resolved, and the letter was sent.

The part which Mrs. Burton had taken in this conversation had surprised even herself. She had been full of anger with Harry Clavering—as wrathful with him as her nature permitted her to be, and yet she had pleaded his cause with all her eloquence, going almost so far in her defence of him as to declare that he was blameless. And, in truth, she was prepared to acquit him of blame—to give him full absolution without penance—if only he could be brought back again into the fold. Her wrath against him would be very hot should he not so return; but all should be more than forgiven

if he would only come back, and do his duty with affectionate and patient fidelity. Her desire was, not so much that justice should be done, as that Florence should have the thing coveted, and that Florence's rival should not have it. According to the arguments as arranged by her feminine logic, Harry Clavering would be all right or all wrong according as he might at last bear himself. She desired success, and, if she could only be successful, was prepared to forgive every thing. And even yet she would not give up the battle, though she admitted to herself that Florence's letter to Mrs. Clavering made the contest more difficult than ever. It might, however, be that Mrs. Clavering would be good enough, just enough, true enough, clever enough, to know that such a letter as this, coming from such a girl, and written under such circumstances, should be taken as meaning nothing. Most mothers would wish to see their sons married to wealth, should wealth throw itself in their way; but Mrs. Clavering, possibly, might not be such a mother as that.

In the mean time, there was before her the terrible necessity of explaining to her husband the step which she had taken without his knowledge, and of which she knew that she must tell him the history before she could sit down to dinner with him in comfort. "Theodore," she said, creeping in out of her own chamber to his dressing-room, while he was washing his hands, "you mustn't be angry with me, but I have done something to-day."

"And why must I not be angry with you?"

"You know what I mean. You mustn't be angry — especially about this — because I don't want you to be."

"That's conclusive," said he. It was manifest to her that he was in a good humor, which was a great blessing. He had not been tried with his work as he was often wont to be, and was therefore willing to be playful.

"What do you think I've done?" said she. "I have been to Bolton Street, and have seen Lady Ongar."

"No!"

"I have, Theodore, indeed."

Mr. Burton had been rubbing his face vehemently with a rough towel at the moment in which the communication had been made to him, and so strongly was he affected by it that he was stopped in his operation and brought to a stand in his movement, looking at his wife over the towel as he held it in both his hands.

"What on earth has made you do such a thing as that?" he said.

"I thought it best. I thought that I might hear the truth — and so I have. I could not bear that Florence should be sacrificed while any thing remained undone that was possible."

"Why didn't you tell me that you were going?"

"Well, my dear, I thought it better not. Of course I ought to have told you, but in this instance I thought it best just to go without the fuss of mentioning it."

"What you really mean is, that if you had told me I should have asked you not to go."

"Exactly."

"And you were determined to have your own way."

"I don't think, Theodore, I care so much about my own way as some women do. I am sure I always think your opinion is better than my own — that is, in most things."

"And what did Lady Ongar say to you?" He had now put down the towel, and was seated in his arm-chair, looking up into his wife's face.

"It would be a long story to tell you all that she said."

"Was she civil to you?"

"She was not uncivil. She is a handsome, proud woman, prone to speak out what she thinks, and determined to have her own way when it is possible; but I think that that she intended to be civil to me personally."

"What is her purpose now?"

"Her purpose is clear enough. She means to marry Harry Clavering if she can get him. She said so. She made no secret of what her wishes are."

"Then, Cissy, let her marry him, and do not let us trouble ourselves farther in the matter."

"But Florence, Theodore! Think of Florence!"

"I am thinking of her, and I think that Harry Clavering is not worth her acceptance. She is as the traveller that fell among thieves. She is hurt and wounded, but not dead. It is for you to be the good Samaritan, but the oil which you should pour into her wounds is not a renewed hope as to that worthless man. Let Lady Ongar have him. As far as I can see, they are fit for each other."

Then she went through with him, diligently, all the arguments which she had used with Florence, palliating Harry's conduct, and explaining the circumstances of

his disloyalty, almost as those circumstances had in truth occurred. "I think you are too hard on him," she said. "You can't be too hard on falsehood," he replied. "No, not while it exists. But you would not be angry with a man forever because he should once have been false? But we do not know that he is false." "Do we not?" said he. "But never mind; we must go to dinner now. Does Florence know of your visit?" Then, before she would allow him to leave his room, she explained to him what had taken place between herself and Florence, and told him of the letter that had been written to Mrs. Clavering. "She is right," said he. "That way out of her difficulty is the best that is left to her." But, nevertheless, Mrs. Burton was resolved that she would not as yet surrender.

Theodore Burton, when he reached the drawing-room, went up to his sister and kissed her. Such a sign of the tenderness of love was not common with him, for he was one of those who are not usually demonstrative in their affection. At the present moment he said nothing of what was passing in his mind, nor did she. She simply raised her face to meet his lips, and pressed his hand as she held it. What need was there of any farther sign between them than this? Then they went to dinner, and their meal was eaten almost in silence. Almost every moment Cecilia's eye was on her sister-in-law. A careful observer, had there been one there, might have seen this; but, while they remained together down stairs, there occurred among them nothing else to mark that all was not well with them.

Nor would the brother have spoken a word during the evening on the subject that was so near to all their hearts had not Florence led the way. When they were at tea, and when Cecilia had already made up her mind that there was to be no farther discussion that night, Florence suddenly broke forth.

"Theodore," she said, "I have been thinking much about it, and I believe I had better go home, to Stratton, to-morrow."

"Oh no," said Cecilia, eagerly.

"I believe it will be better that I should," continued Florence. "I suppose it is very weak in me to own it; but I am unhappy, and, like the wounded bird, I feel that it will be well that I should hide myself."

Cecilia was at her feet in a moment. "Dearest Flo," she said, "is not this your home as well as Stratton?"

"When I am able to be happy, it is. Those who have light hearts may have more homes than one, but it is not so with those

whose hearts are heavy. I think it will be best for me to go."

"You shall do exactly as you please," said her brother. "In such a matter I will not try to persuade you. I only wish that we could tend to comfort you."

"You do comfort me. If I know that you think I am doing right, that will comfort me more than any thing. Absolute and immediate comfort is not to be had when one is sorrowful."

"No, indeed," said her brother. "Sorrow should not be killed too quickly. I always think that those who are impervious to grief must be impervious also to happiness. If you have feelings capable of the one, you must have them capable also of the other."

"You should wait, at any rate, till you get an answer from Mrs. Clavering," said Cecilia.

"I do not know that she has any answer to send to me."

"Oh yes, she must answer you, if you will think of it. If she accepts what you have said"—

"She cannot but accept it."

"Then she must reply to you. There is something which you have asked her to send to you; and I think you should wait, at any rate, till it reaches you here. Mind, I do not think her answer will be of that nature, but it is clear that you should wait for it, whatever it may be." Then Florence, with the concurrence of her brother's opinion, consented to remain in London for a few days, expecting the answer which would be sent by Mrs. Clavering; and after that no farther discussion took place as to her trouble.

CHAPTER XL.

THE SHEEP RETURNS TO THE FOLD.

HARRY CLAVERING had spoken solemn words to his mother, during his illness, which both he and she regarded as a promise that Florence should not be deserted by him. After that promise nothing more was said between them on the subject for a few days. Mrs. Clavering was contented that the promise had been made, and Harry himself, in the weakness consequent upon his illness, was willing enough to accept the excuse which his illness gave him for postponing any action in the matter. But the fever had left him, and he was sitting up in his mother's room, when Florence's letter reached the parsonage, and with the letter, the little parcel which she herself had packed up so carefully. On the

day before that a few words had passed between the rector and his wife, which will explain the feelings of both them in the matter.

"Have you heard," said he, speaking in a voice hardly above a whisper, although no third person was in the room, "that Harry is again thinking of making Julia his wife?"

"He is not thinking of doing so," said Mrs. Clavering. "They who say so do him wrong."

"It would be a great thing for him as regards money."

"But he is engaged — and Florence Burton has been received here as his future wife. I could not endure to think that it should be so. At any rate, it is not true."

"I only tell you what I heard," said the rector, gently sighing, partly in obedience to his wife's implied rebuke, and partly at the thought that so grand a marriage should not be within his son's reach. The rector was beginning to be aware that Harry would hardly make a fortune at the profession which he had chosen, and that a rich marriage would be an easy way out of all the difficulties which such a failure promised. The rector was a man who dearly loved easy ways out of difficulties. But in such matters as these his wife he knew was imperative and powerful, and he lacked the courage to plead for a cause that was prudent, but ungenerous.

When Mrs. Clavering received the letter and parcel on the next morning, Harry Clavering was still in bed. With the delightful privilege of a convalescent invalid, he was allowed in these days to get up just when getting up became more comfortable than lying in bed, and that time did not usually come till eleven o'clock was past; but the postman reached the Clavering parsonage by nine. The letter, as we know, was addressed to Mrs. Clavering herself, as was also the outer envelope which contained the packet; but the packet itself was addressed in Florence's clear handwriting to Harry Clavering, Esq. "That is a large parcel to come by post, mamma," said Fanny.

"Yes, my dear; but it is something particular."

"It's from some tradesman, I suppose," said the rector.

"No, it's not from a tradesman," said Mrs. Clavering. But she said nothing further, and both husband and daughter perceived that it was not intended that they should ask further questions.

Fanny, as usual, had taken her brother his breakfast, and Mrs. Clavering did not

go up to him till that ceremony had been completed and removed. Indeed, it was necessary that she should study Florence's letter in her own room before she could speak to him about it. What the parcel contained she well knew, even before the letter had been thoroughly read; and I need hardly say that the treasure was sacred in her hands. When she had finished the perusal of the letter there was a tear — a gentle tear — in each eye. She understood it all, and could fathom the strength and weakness of every word which Florence had written. But she was such a woman — exactly such a woman — as Cecilia Burton had pictured to herself. Mrs. Clavering was good enough, great enough, true enough, clever enough to know that Harry's love for Florence should be sustained, and his fancy for Lady Ongar overcome. At no time would she have been proud to see her son prosperous only in the prosperity of a wife's fortune; but she would have been thoroughly ashamed of him had he resolved to pursue such prosperity under his present circumstances.

But her tears — though they were there in the corners of her eyes — were not painful tears. Dear Florence! She was suffering bitterly now. This very day would be a day of agony to her. There had been for her, doubtless, many days of agony during the past month. That the letter was true in all its words Mrs. Clavering did not doubt. That Florence believed that all was over between her and Harry, Mrs. Clavering was as sure as Florence had intended that she should be. But all should not be over, and the days of agony should soon be at an end. Her boy had promised her, and to her he had always been true. And she understood, too, the way in which these dangers had come upon him, and her judgment was not heavy upon her son — her gracious boy, who had ever been so good to her! It might be that he had been less diligent at his work than he should have been — that on that account farther delay would still be necessary; but Florence would forgive that, and he had promised that Florence should not be deserted.

Then she took the parcel in her hands, and considered all its circumstances — how precious had once been its contents, and how precious doubtless they still were, though they had been thus repudiated! And she thought of the moments — nay, rather the hours — which had been passed in the packing of that little packet. She well understood how a girl would linger over such dear pain, touching the things

over and over again, allowing herself to read morsels of the letters at which she had already forbidden herself even to look, till every word had been again seen and weighed, again caressed and again abjured. She knew how those little trinkets would have been fondled! How salt had been the tears that had fallen on them, and how carefully the drops would have been removed. Every fold in the paper of the two envelopes, with the little morsels of wax just adequate for their purpose, told of the lingering painful care with which the work had been done. Ah! the parcel should go back at once with words of love that should put an end to all that pain. She, who had sent these loved things away, should have her letters again, and should touch her little treasures with fingers that should take pleasure in the touching. She should again read her lover's words with an enduring delight. Mrs. Clavering understood it all, as though she were still a girl with a lover of her own.

Harry was beginning to think that the time had come in which getting up would be more comfortable than lying in bed, when his mother knocked at his door and entered his room. "I was just going to make a move, mother," he said, having reached that stage of convalescence in which some shame comes upon the idler.

"But I want to speak to you first, my dear," said Mrs. Clavering. "I have got a letter for you, or rather a parcel." Harry held out his hand, and, taking the packet, at once recognized the writing of the address.

"You know from whom it comes, Harry?"

"Oh yes, mother."

"And do you know what it contains?" Harry, still holding the packet, looked at it, but said nothing. "I know," said his mother, "for she has written and told me. Will you see her letter to me?" Again Harry held out his hand, but his mother did not at once give him the letter. "First of all, my dear, let us know that we understand each other. This dear girl—to me she is inexpressibly dear—is to be your wife."

"Yes, mother, it shall be so."

"That is my own boy! Harry, I have never doubted you—have never doubted that you would be right at last. Now you shall see her letter. But you must remember that she has had cause to make her unhappy."

"I will remember."

"Had you not been ill, everything would of course have been all right before now."

As to the correctness of this assertion the reader probably will have doubts of his own. Then she handed him the letter, and sat on his bedside while he read it. At first he was startled, and made almost indignant at the firmness of the girl's words. She gave him up as though it were a thing quite decided, and uttered no expression of her own regret in doing so. There was no soft woman's wail in her words. But there was in them something which made him unconsciously long to get back the thing which he had so nearly thrown away from him. They inspired him with a doubt whether he might yet succeed, which very doubt greatly increased his desire. As he read the letter for the second time, Julia became less beautiful in his imagination, and the charm of Florence's character became stronger.

"Well, dear" said his mother, when she saw that he had finished the second reading of the epistle.

He hardly knew how to express, even to his mother, all his feelings—the shame that he felt, and with the shame something of indignation that he should have been so repulsed. And of his love, too, he was afraid to speak. He was willing enough to give the required assurance, but after that he would have preferred to have been left alone. But his mother could not leave him without some further word of agreement between them as to the course which they would pursue.

"Will you write to her, mother, or shall I?"

"I shall write, certainly—by to-day's post. I would not leave her an hour, if I could help it, without an assurance of your unaltered affection."

"I could go to town to-morrow, mother—could I not?"

"Not to-morrow, Harry. It would be foolish. Say on Monday."

"And you will write to-day."

"Certainly."

"I will send a line also—just a line."

"And the parcel?"

"I have not opened it yet."

"You know what it contains. Send it back at once, Harry—at once. If I understand her feelings, she will not be happy till she gets it into her hands again. We will send Jem over to the post-office, and have it registered."

When so much was settled, Mrs. Clavering went away about the affairs of her house, thinking as she did so of the loving words with which she would strive to give back happiness to Florence Burton.

Harry, when he was alone, slowly opened

the parcel. He could not resist the temptation of doing this, and of looking again at the things which she had sent back to him. And he was not without an idea — perhaps a hope — that there might be with them some short note — some scrap containing a few words for himself. If he had any such hope he was disappointed. There were his own letters, all scented with lavender from the casket in which they had been preserved; there was the rich bracelet which had been given with some little ceremony, and the cheap brooch which he had thrown to her as a joke, and which she had sworn that she would value the most of all because she could wear it every day; and there was the pencil-case which he had fixed on to her watch-chain, while her fingers were touching his fingers, caressing him for his love while her words were rebuking him for his awkwardness. He remembered it all as the things lay strewn upon his bed. And he re-read every word of his own words. "What a fool a man makes of himself!" he said to himself at last, with something of the cheeriness of laughter about his heart. But as he said so he was quite ready to make himself a fool after the same fashion again, if only there were not in his way that difficulty of recommencing. Had it been possible for him to write again at once in the old strain, without any reference to his own conduct during the last month, he would have begun his fooling without waiting to finish his dressing.

"Did you open the parcel?" his mother asked him, some hour or so before it was necessary that Jem should be started on his mission.

"Yes, I thought it best to open it."

"And have you made it up again?"

"Not yet, mother."

"Put this with it, dear." And his mother gave him a little jewel, a cupid in mosaic surrounded by tiny diamonds, which he remembered her to wear ever since he had first noticed the things she had worn. "Not from me, mind. I give it to you. Come — will you trust me to pack them?" Then Mrs. Clavering again made up the parcel, and added the trinket which she had brought with her.

Harry at last brought himself to write a few words. "DEAREST, DEAREST FLORENCE, — They will not let me out, or I would go to you at once. My mother has written, and though I have not seen her letter, I know what it contains. Indeed, indeed you may believe it all. May I not venture to return the parcel? I do send it back, and implore you to keep it. I shall

be in town, I think, on Monday, and will go to Onslow Crescent — instantly. Your own, H. C." Then there was scrawled a postscript which was worth all the rest put together — was better than his own note, better than his mother's letter, better than the returned packet. "I love no one better than you — no one half so well — neither now, nor ever did." These words, whether wholly true or only partially so, were at least to the point, and were taken by Cecilia Burton, when she heard of them, as a confession of faith that demanded instant and plenary absolution.

The trouble which had called Harry down to Clavering remained, I regret to say, almost in full force now that his prolonged visit had been brought so near its close. Mr. Saul, indeed, had agreed to resign his curacy, and was already on the look-out for similar employment in some other parish. And, since his interview with Fanny's father, he had never entered the rectory or spoken to Fanny. Fanny had promised that there should be no such speaking, and, indeed, no danger of that kind was feared. Whatever Mr. Saul might do he would do openly — nay, audaciously. But, though there existed this security, nevertheless things as regarded Fanny were very unpleasant. When Mr. Saul had commenced his courtship, she had agreed with her family in almost ridiculing the idea of such a lover. There had been a feeling with her as with the others that poor Mr. Saul was to be pitied. Then she had come to regard his overtures as matters of grave import — not indeed avowing to her mother any thing so strong as a return of his affection, but speaking of his proposal as one to which there was no other objection than that of a want of money. Now, however, she went moping about the house as though she were a victim of true love, condemned to run unsmoothly forever — as though her passion for Mr. Saul were too much for her, and she were waiting in patience till death should relieve her from the cruelty of her parents. She never complained. Such victims never do complain. But she moped and was wretched, and when her mother questioned her, struggling to find out how strong this feeling might in truth be, Fanny would simply make her dutiful promises — promises which were wickedly dutiful — that she would never mention the name of Mr. Saul any more. Mr. Saul, in the mean time, went about his parish duties with grim energy, supplying the rector's shortcomings without a word. He would have

been glad to preach all the sermons and read all the services during these six months, had he been allowed to do so. He was constant in the schools—more constant than ever in his visitings. He was very courteous to Mr. Clavering when the necessities of their position brought them together. For all this, Mr. Clavering hated him—unjustly. For a man placed as Mr. Saul was placed, a line of conduct exactly level with that previously followed is impossible, and it was better that he should become more energetic in his duties than less so. It will be easily understood that all these things interfered much with the general happiness of the family at the rectory at this time.

The Monday came, and Harry Clavering, now convalescent, and simply interesting from the remaining effects of his illness, started on his journey for London. There had come no farther letters from Onslow Terrace to the parsonage, and, indeed, owing to the intervention of Sunday, none could have come unless Florence had written by return of post. Harry made his journey, beginning with some promise of happiness to himself, but becoming somewhat uneasy as his train drew near to London. He had behaved badly, and he knew that in the first place he must own that he had done so. To men such a necessity is always grievous. Women not unfrequently like the task. To confess, submit, and be accepted as confessing and submitting, comes naturally to the feminine mind. The cry of peccavi sounds soft and pretty when made by sweet lips in a loving voice. But a man who can own that he has done amiss without a pang—who can so own it to another man, or even to a woman—is usually but a poor creature. Harry must now make such confession, and therefore he became uneasy. And then, for him, there was another task behind the one which he would be called upon to perform this evening—a task which would have nothing of pleasantness in it to redeem its pain. He must confess not only to Florence—where his confession might probably have its reward—but he must confess also to Julia. This second confession would, indeed, be a hard task to him. That, however, was to be postponed till the morrow. On this evening he had pledged himself that he would go direct to Onslow Terrace, and this he did as soon after he had reached his lodgings as was possible. It was past six when he reached London, and it was not yet eight when, with palpitating heart, he knocked at Mr. Burton's door.

I must take the reader back with me for a few minutes, in order that we may see after what fashion the letters from Clavering were received by the ladies in Onslow Terrace. On that day Mr. Burton had been required to go out of London by one of the early trains, and had not been in the house when the postman came. Nothing had been said between Cecilia and Florence as to their hopes or fears in regard to an answer from Clavering—nothing, at least, since that conversation in which Florence had agreed to remain in London for yet a few days; but each of them was very nervous on the matter. Any answer, if sent at once from Clavering, would arrive on this morning, and therefore, when the well-known knock was heard, neither of them was able to maintain her calmness perfectly. But yet nothing was said, nor did either of them rise from her seat at the breakfast-table. Presently the girl came in with apparently a bundle of letters, which she was still sorting when she entered the room. There were two or three for Mr. Burton, two for Cecilia, and then two besides the registered packet for Florence. For that a receipt was needed, and as Florence had seen the address and recognized the writing, she was hardly able to give her signature. As soon as the maid was gone, Cecilia could keep her seat no longer. "I know those are from Clavering," she said, rising from her chair, and coming round to the side of the table. Florence instinctively swept the packet into her lap, and, leaning forward, covered the letters with her hands. "Oh, Florence, let us see them—let us see them at once. If we are to be happy, let us know it." But Florence paused, still leaning over her treasures, and hardly daring to show her burning face. Even yet it might be that she was rejected. Then Cecilia went back to her seat, and simply looked at her sister with beseeching eyes. "I think I'll go up-stairs," said Florence. "Are you afraid of me, Flo?" Cecilia answered reproachfully. "Let me see the outside of them." Then Florence brought them round the table, and put them into her sister's hands. "May I open this one from Mrs. Clavering?" Florence nodded her head. Then the seal was broken, and in one minute the two women were crying in each other's arms. "I was quite sure of it," said Cecilia, through her tears—"perfectly sure. I never doubted it for a moment. How could you have talked of going to Stratton?" At last Florence got herself away up to the window, and gradually mustered courage to break the en-

velope of her lover's letter. It was not at once that she showed the postscript to Cecilia, nor at once that the packet was opened. That last ceremony she did perform in the solitude of her own room. But before the day was over the postscript had been shown, and the added trinket had been exhibited. "I remember it well," said Florence. "Mrs. Clavering wore it on her forehead when we dined at Lady Clavering's. Mrs. Burton in all this saw something of the gentle persuasion which the mother had used, but of that she said nothing. That he should be back again, and should have repented, was enough for her.

Mr. Burton was again absent when Harry Clavering knocked in person at the door, but on this occasion his absence had been specially arranged by him with a view to Harry's comfort. "He won't want to see me this evening," he had said. "Indeed, you'll all get on a great deal better without me." He therefore had remained away from home, and, not being a club man, had dined most uncomfortably at an eating-house. "Are the ladies at home?" Harry asked, when the door was opened. Oh, yes, they were at home. There was no danger that they should be found out on such an occasion as this. The girl looked at him pleasantly, calling him by his name as she answered him, as though she too desired to show him that he had again been taken into favor—into her favor as well as that of her mistress.

He hardly knew what he was doing as he ran up the steps to the drawing-room. He was afraid of what was to come, but nevertheless he rushed at his fate as some young soldier rushes at the trench in which he feels that he may probably fall. So Harry Clavering hurried on, and before he had looked round upon the room which he had entered, found his fate with Florence on his bosom.

Alas! alas! I fear that justice was outraged in the welcome that Harry received on that evening. I have said that he would be called upon to own his sins, and so much, at least, should have been required of him. But he owned no sin. I have said that a certain degradation must attend him in that first interview after his reconciliation. Instead of this, the hours that he spent that evening in Onslow Terrace were hours of one long ovation. He was, as it were, put upon a throne as a king who had returned from his conquest, and those two women did him honor, almost kneeling at his feet. Cecilia was almost as tender with him as

Florence, pleading to her own false heart the fact of his illness as his excuse. There was something of the pallor of the sick-room left with him—a slight tenuity in his hands and brightness in his eye which did him yeoman service. Had he been quite robust, Cecilia might have felt that she could not justify to herself the peculiar softness of her words. After the first quarter of an hour he was supremely happy. His awkwardness had gone, and as he sat with his arm round Florence's waist, he found that the little pencil case had again been attached to her chain, and as he looked down upon her he saw that the cheap brooch was again on her breast. It would have been pretty, could an observer have been there, to see the skill with which they both steered clear of any word or phrase which could be disagreeable to him. One might have thought that it would have been impossible to avoid all touch of a rebuke. The very fact that he was forgiven would seem to imply some fault that required pardon. But there was no hint at any fault. The tact of women excels the skill of men; and so perfect was the tact of these women, that not a word was said which wounded Harry's ear. He had come again into their fold, and they were rejoiced and showed their joy. He who had gone astray had repented, and they were beautifully tender to the repentant sheep.

CHAPTER XLII.

RESTITUTION.

HARRY staid a little too long with his love—a little longer, at least, than had been computed, and, in consequence, met Theodore Burton in the Crescent as he was leaving it. This meeting could hardly be made without something of pain, and perhaps it was well for Harry that he should have such an opportunity as this for getting over it quickly. But when he saw Mr. Burton under the bright gas-lamp, he would very willingly have avoided him, had it been possible.

"Well, Harry," said Burton, giving his hand to the repentant sheep.

"How are you, Burton?" said Harry, trying to speak with an unconcerned voice. Then, in answer to an inquiry as to his health, he told of his own illness, speaking of that confounded fever having made him very low. He intended no deceit, but he made more of the fever than was necessary.

"When will you come back to the shop?" Burton asked. It must be remembered that, though the brother could not refuse to welcome back to his home his sister's lover, still he thought that the engagement was a misfortune. He did not believe in Harry as a man of business, and had almost rejoiced when Florence had been so nearly quit of him. And now there was a taint of sarcasm in his voice as he asked as to Harry's return to the chambers in the Adelphi.

"I can hardly quite say as yet," said Harry, still pleading his illness. "They were very much against my coming up to London so soon. Indeed, I should not have done it had I not felt so very — very anxious to see Florence. I don't know, Burton, whether I ought to say anything to you about that."

"I suppose you have said what you had to say to the women."

"Oh yes. I think they understand me completely, and I hope that I understand them."

"In that case, I don't know that you need say anything to me. Come to the Adelphi as soon as you can — that's all. I never think myself that a man becomes a bit stronger after an illness by remaining idle." Then Harry passed on, and felt that he had escaped easily in that interview.

But as he walked home he was compelled to think of the step which he must next take. When he had last seen Lady Ongar he had left her with a promise that Florence was to be deserted for her sake. As yet that promise would by her be supposed to be binding. Indeed, he had thought it to be binding on himself till he had found himself under his mother's influence at the parsonage. During his last few weeks in London he had endured an agony of doubt, but in his vacillations the pendulum had always veered more strongly toward Bolton Street than to Onslow Crescent. Now the swinging of the pendulum had ceased altogether. From henceforth Bolton Street must be forbidden ground to him, and the sheepfold in Onslow Crescent must be his home till he should have established a small peculiar fold for himself. But, as yet, he had still before him the task of communicating his final decision to the lady in Bolton Street. As he walked home he determined that he had better do so in the first place by letter, and so eager was he as to the propriety of doing this at once, that on his return to his lodgings he sat down and wrote the letter before he went to his bed. It was not very easily written. Here, at any rate, he had to make those confessions of which I have

before spoken — confessions which it may be less difficult to make with pen and ink than with spoken words, but which, when so made, are more degrading. The word that is written is a thing capable of permanent life, and lives frequently to the confusion of its parent. A man should make his confessions always by word of mouth, if it be possible. Whether such a course would have been possible to Harry Clavering may be doubtful. It might have been that in a personal meeting the necessary confession would not have got itself adequately spoken. Thinking, perhaps, of this, he wrote his letter as follows on that night.

"Bloombsbury Square, July, 186-."

The date was easily written, but how was he to go on after that? In what form of affection or indifference was he to address her whom he had at that last meeting called his own, his dearest Julia? He got out of his difficulty in the way common to ladies and gentlemen under such stress, and did not address her by any name or any epithet. The date he allowed to remain, and then he went away at once to the matter of his subject.

"I feel that I owe it you at once to tell you what has been my history during the last few weeks. I came up from Clavering to-day, and have since that been with Mrs. and Miss Burton. Immediately on my return from them I sit down to write you."

After having said so much, Harry probably felt that the rest of his letter would be surplusage. Those few words would tell her all that it was required that she should know. But courtesy demanded that he should say more, and he went on with his confession.

"You know that I became engaged to Miss Burton soon after your own marriage. I feel now that I should have told you this when we first met; but yet, had I done so, it would have seemed as though I told it with a special object. I don't know whether I make myself understood in this. I can only hope that I do so."

Understood! Of course she understood it all. She required no blundering explanation from him to assist her intelligence.

"I wish now that I had mentioned it. It would have been better for both of us. I

should have been saved much pain, and you, perhaps, some uneasiness.

"I was called down to Clavering a few weeks ago about some business in the family, and then became ill, so that I was confined to my bed instead of returning to town. Had it not been for this I should not have left you so long in suspense — that is, if there has been suspense. For myself, I have to own that I have been very weak — worse than weak, I fear you will think. I do not know whether your old regard for me will prompt you to make any excuse for me, but I am well sure that I can make none for myself which will not have suggested itself to you without my urging it. If you choose to think that I have been heartless — or, rather, if you are able so to think of me, no words of mine, written or spoken now, will remove that impression from your mind.

"I believe that I need write nothing farther. You will understand from what I have said all that I should have to say were I to refer at length to that which has passed between us. All that is over now, and it only remains for me to express a hope that you may be happy. Whether we shall ever see each other again, who shall say? but if we do, I trust that we may not meet as enemies. May God bless you here and hereafter.

HARRY CLAVERING."

When the letter was finished Harry sat for a while by his open window looking at the moon, over the chimney-pots of his square, and thinking of his career in life as it had hitherto been fulfilled. The great promise of his earlier days had not been kept. His plight in the world was now poor enough, though his hopes had been so high. He was engaged to be married, but had no income on which to marry. He had narrowly escaped great wealth. Ah! it was hard for him to think of that without a regret: but he did so strive to think of it. Though he told himself that it would have been evil for him to have depended on money which had been procured by the very act which had been to him an injury — to have dressed himself in the feathers which had been plucked from Lord Ongar's wings — it was hard for him to think of all that he had missed, and rejoice thoroughly that he had missed it. But he told himself that he so rejoiced, and endeavored to be glad that he had not soiled his hands with riches which never would have belonged to the woman he had loved had she not earned them by being false to him. Early on the following morning he sent off his letter, and then,

putting himself into a cab, bowled down to Onslow Crescent. The sheepfold now was very pleasant to him when the head shepherd was away, and so much gratification it was natural that he should allow himself.

That evening, when he came from his club, he found a note from Lady Ongar. It was very short, and the blood rushed to his face as he felt ashamed at seeing with how much apparent ease she had answered him. He had written with difficulty, and had written awkwardly. But there was nothing awkward in her words.

"DEAR HARRY, — We are quits now. I do not know why we should ever meet as enemies. I shall never feel myself to be an enemy of yours. I think it would be well that we should see each other, and, if you have no objection to seeing me, I will be at home any evening that you may call. Indeed, I am at home always in the evening. Surely, Harry, there can be no reason why we should not meet. You need not fear that there will be danger in it.

"Will you give my compliments to Miss Florence Burton, with my best wishes for her happiness? Your Mrs. Burton I have seen — as you may have heard, and I congratulate you on your friend. Yours always, J. O."

The writing of this letter seemed to have been easy enough, and certainly there was nothing in it that was awkward; but I think that the writer had suffered more in the writing than Harry had done in producing his longer epistle. But she had known how to hide her suffering, and had used a tone which told no tale of her wounds. We are quits now, she had said, and she had repeated the words over and over again to herself as she walked up and down her room. Yes, they were quits now, if the reflection of that fact could do her any good. She had ill treated him in her early days; but, as she had told herself so often, she had served him rather than injured him by that ill treatment. She had been false to him; but her falsehood had preserved him from a lot which could not have been fortunate. With such a clog as she would have been round his neck — with such a wife, without a shilling of fortune, how could he have risen in the world? No! Though she had deceived him, she had served him. Then, after that, had come the tragedy of her life, the terrible days in thinking of which she still shuddered, the days of her husband and Sophie Gordeloup — that terrible death-bed, those attacks upon her

honor, misery upon misery, as to which she never now spoke a word to any one, and as to which she was resolved that she never would speak again. She had sold herself for money, and had got the price, but the punishment of her offence had been very heavy. And now, in these latter days, she had thought to compensate the man she had loved for the treachery with which she had used him. That treachery had been serviceable to him, but not the less should the compensation be very rich. And she would love him too. Ah! yes, she had always loved him. He should have it all now — everything, if only he would consent to forget that terrible episode in her life, as she would strive to forget it. All that should remain to remind them of Lord Ongar would be the wealth that should henceforth belong to Harry Clavering. Such had been her dream, and Harry had come to her with words of love which made it seem to be a reality. He had spoken to her words of love which he was now forced to withdraw, and the dream was dissipated. It was not to be allowed to her to escape her penalty so easily as that! As for him, they were now quits. That being the case, there could be no reason why they should quarrel.

But what now should she do with her wealth, and especially how should she act in respect to that place down in the country? Though she had learned to hate Ongar Park during her solitary visit there, she had still looked forward to the pleasure the property might give her when she should be able to bestow it upon Harry Clavering. But that had been part of her dream, and the dream was now over. Through it all she had been conscious that she might hardly dare to hope that the end of her punishment should come so soon — and now she knew that it was not to come. As far as she could see that, there was no end to her punishment in prospect for her. From her first meeting with Harry Clavering on the platform of the railway station, his presence, or her thoughts of him, had sufficed to give some brightness to her life — had enabled her to support the friendship of Sophie Gordeloup, and also to support her solitude when poor Sophie had been banished. But now she was left without any resource. As she sat alone, meditating on all this, she endeavored to console herself with the reflection that, after all, she was the one whom Harry loved — whom Harry would have chosen had he been free to choose. But the comfort to be derived from that was very poor. Yes, he had loved her once — nay, perhaps he loved her still. But when

that love was her own she had rejected it. She had rejected it, simply declaring to him, to her friends, and to the world at large, that she preferred to be rich. She had her reward, and, bowing her head upon her hands, she acknowledged that the punishment was deserved.

Her first step after writing her note to Harry was to send for Mr. Turnbull, her lawyer. She had expected to see Harry on the evening of the day on which she had written, but instead of that she received a note from him in which he said that he would come to her before long. Mr. Turnbull was more instant in obeying her commands, and was with her on the morning after he received her injunction. He was almost a perfect stranger to her, having only seen her once, and that for a few moments after her return to England. Her marriage settlements had been prepared for her by Sir Hugh's attorney; but during her sojourn in Florence it had become necessary that she should have some one in London to look after her own affairs, and Mr. Turnbull had been recommended to her by lawyers employed by her husband. He was a prudent, sensible man, who recognized it to be his imperative interest to look after his client's interest. And he had done his duty by Lady Ongar in that trying time immediately after her return. An offer had then been made by the Courton family to give Julia her income without opposition if she would surrender Ongar Park. To this she had made objections with indignation, and Mr. Turnbull, though he had at first thought that she would be wise to comply with the terms proposed, had done her work for her with satisfactory expedition. Since those days she had not seen him, but now she had summoned him, and he was with her in Bolton Street.

"I want to speak to you, Mr. Turnbull," she said, "about that place down in Surrey. I don't like it."

"Not like Ongar Park?" he said, "I have always heard that it is so charming."

"It is not charming to me. It is a sort of property that I don't want, and I mean to give it up."

"Lord Ongar's uncles would buy your interest in it, I have no doubt."

"Exactly. They have sent to me, offering to do so. My brother-in-law, Sir Hugh Clavering, called on me with a message from them saying so. I thought that he was very foolish to come, and so I told him. Such things should be done by one's lawyers. Don't you think so, Mr. Turnbull?" Mr. Turnbull smiled as he declared that, of

course, he, being a lawyer, was of that opinion. "I am afraid they will have thought me uncivil," continued Julia, "as I spoke rather brusquely to Sir Hugh Clavering. I am not inclined to take any steps through Sir Hugh Clavering, but I do not know that I have any reason to be angry with the little lord's family."

"Really, Lady Ongar, I think not. When your ladyship returned there was some opposition thought of for a while, but I really do not think it was their fault."

"No, it was not their fault."

"That was my feeling at the time; it was, indeed."

"It was the fault of Lord Ongar — of my husband. As regards all the Courtons, I have no word of complaint to make. It is not to be expected — it is not desirable that they and I should be friends. It is impossible, after what has passed, that there should be such friendship. But they have never injured me, and I wish to oblige them. Had Ongar Park suited me, I should doubtless have kept it; but it does not suit me, and they are welcome to have it back again."

"Has a price been named, Lady Ongar?"

"No price need be named. There is to be no question of a price. Lord Ongar's mother is welcome to the place — or rather to such interest as I have in it."

"And to pay a rent?" suggested Mr. Turnbull.

"To pay no rent. Nothing would induce me to let the place, or to sell my right in it. I will have no bargain about it. But as nothing also will induce me to live there, I am not such a dog in the manger as to wish to keep it. If you will have the kindness to see Mr. Courton's lawyer, and to make arrangements about it."

"But, Lady Ongar, what you call your right in the estate is worth over twenty thousand pounds — it is, indeed. You could borrow twenty thousand pounds on the security of it to-morrow."

"But I don't want to borrow twenty thousand pounds."

"No, no, exactly — of course you don't. But I point out that fact to show the value. You would be making a present of that sum of money to people who do not want it — who have no claim upon you. I really don't see how they could take it."

Mrs. Courton wishes to have the place very much."

"But, my lady, she has never thought of getting it without paying for it. Lady Ongar, I really cannot advise you to

take any such step as that — indeed, I cannot. I should be wrong, as your lawyer, if I did not point out to you that such a proceeding would be quite romantic — quite so — what the world would call Quixotic. People don't expect such things as that — they don't, indeed."

"People don't often have such reasons as I have," said Lady Ongar. Mr. Turnbull sat silent for a while, looking as though he were unhappy. The proposition made to him was one which, as a lawyer, he felt to be very distasteful to him. He knew that his client had no male friends in whom she confided, and he felt that the world would blame him if he allowed this lady to part with her property in the way she had suggested.

"You will find that I am in earnest," she continued, smiling, "and you may as well give way to my vagaries with a good grace."

"They would not take it, Lady Ongar."

"At any rate, we can try them. If you will make them understand that I don't at all want the place, and that it will go to rack and ruin because there is no one to live there, I am sure they will take it."

Then Mr. Turnbull again sat silent and unhappy, thinking with what words he might best bring forward his last and strongest argument against this rash proceeding.

"Lady Ongar," he said, "in your peculiar position, there are double reasons why you should not act in this way."

"What do you mean, Mr. Turnbull? What is my peculiar position?"

"The world will say that you have restored Ongar Park because you were afraid to keep it. Indeed, Lady Ongar, you had better let it remain as it is."

"I care nothing for what the world says," she exclaimed, rising quickly from her chair — "nothing, nothing!"

"You should really hold by your rights — you should, indeed. Who can possibly say what other interests may be concerned? You may marry, and live for the next fifty years, and have a family. It is my duty, Lady Ongar, to point out these things to you."

"I am sure you are quite right, Mr. Turnbull," she said, struggling to maintain a quiet demeanor. "You, of course, are only doing your duty. But whether I marry or whether I remain as I am, I shall give up this place. And as for what the world, as you call it, may say, I will not deny that I cared much for that on my immediate return. What people said then made me very unhappy. But I care nothing for it now. I have established my rights, and

that has been sufficient. To me it seems that the world, as you call it, has been civil enough in its usage of me lately. It is only of those who should have been my friends that I have a right to complain. If you will please to do this thing for me, I will be obliged to you."

"If you are quite determined about it?"—

"I am quite determined. What is the use of the place to me? I never shall go there. What is the use even of the money that comes to me? I have no purpose for it. I have nothing to do with it."

There was something in her tone as she said this which well filled him with pity.

"You should remember," he said, "how short a time it is since you became a widow. Things will be different with you soon."

"My clothes will be different, if you mean that," she answered, "but I do not know that there will be any other change in me. But I am wrong to trouble you with all this. If you will let Mr. Courton's lawyer know, with my compliments to Mrs. Courton, that I have heard that she would like to have the place, and that I do not want it, I will be obliged to you." Mr. Turnbull having by this time perceived that she was quite in earnest, took his leave, having promised to do her bidding.

In this interview she had told her lawyer only a part of the plan which was now running in her head. As for giving up Ongar Park, she took to herself no merit for that. The place had been odious to her ever since she had endeavored to establish herself there, and had found that the clergyman's wife would not speak to her—that even her own housekeeper would hardly condescend to hold converse with her. She felt that she would be a dog in the manger to keep the place in her own possession. But she had thoughts beyond this—resolutions only as yet half formed as to a wider surrender. She had disgraced herself, ruined herself, robbed herself of all happiness by the marriage she had made. Her misery had not been simply the misery of that lord's lifetime. As might have been expected, that was soon over. But an enduring wretchedness had come after that from which she saw no prospect of escape. What was to be her future life, left as she was and would be, in desolation? If she were to give it all up—all the wealth that had been so ill-gotten—might there not then be some hope of comfort for her?

She had been willing enough to keep Lord Ongar's money, and use it for the

purposes of her own comfort, while she had still hoped that comfort might come from it. The remembrance of all that she had to give had been very pleasant to her, as long as she had hoped that Harry Clavering would receive it at her hands. She had not at once felt that the fruit had all turned to ashes. But now—now that Harry was gone from her—now that she had no friend left to her whom she could hope to make happy by her munificence, the very knowledge of her wealth was a burden to her. And as she thought of her riches in these first days of her desertion, as she had indeed been thinking since Cecilia Burton had been with her, she came to understand that she was degraded by their acquisition. She had done that which had been unpardonably bad, and she felt like Judas when he stood with the price of his treachery in his hand. He had given up his money, and would not she do as much? There had been a moment in which she had nearly declared all her purpose to the lawyer, but she was held back by the feeling that she ought to make her plans certain before she communicated them to him.

She must live. She could not go out and hang herself as Judas had none. And then there was her title and rank, of which she did not know whether it was within her power to divest herself. She sorely felt the want of some one from whom in her present need she might ask council; of some friend to whom she could trust to tell her in what way she might now best atone for the evil she had done. Plans ran through her head which were thrown aside almost as soon as made, because she saw that they were impracticable. She even longed in these days for her sister's aid, though she had thought but little of Hermy as a counsellor. She had no friend whom she might ask—unless she might still ask Harry Clavering.

If she did not keep it all, might she still keep something—enough for decent life—and yet comfort herself with the feeling that she had expiated her sin? And what would be said of her when she had made this great surrender? Would not the world laugh at her instead of praising her—that world as to which she had assured Mr. Turnbull that she did not care what its verdict about her might be? She had many doubts. Ah! why had not Harry Clavering remained true to her? But her punishment had come upon her with all its severity, and she acknowledged to herself now that it was not to be avoided.

CHAPTER XLIII.

LADY ONGAR'S REVENGE.

AT last came the night which Harry had fixed for his visit to Bolton Street. He had looked forward certainly with no pleasure to the interview, and, now that the time for it had come, was disposed to think that Lady Ongar had been unwise in asking for it. But he had promised that he would go, and there was no possible escape.

He dined that evening in Onslow Crescent, where he was now again established with all his old comfort. He had again gone up to the children's nursery with Cecilia, had kissed them all in their cots, and made himself quite at home in the establishment. It was with them there as though there had been no dreadful dream about Lady Ongar. It was so altogether with Cecilia and Florence, and even Mr. Burton was allowing himself to be brought round to a charitable view of Harry's character. Harry on this day had gone to the chambers in the Adelphi for an hour, and, walking away with Theodore Burton, had declared his intention of working like a horse. "If you were to say like a man, it would perhaps be better," said Burton. "I must leave you to say that," answered Harry; "for the present, I will content myself with the horse." Burton was willing to hope, and allowed himself once more to fall into his old pleasant way of talking about the business as though there were no other subject under the sun so full of manifold interest. He was very keen at the present moment about Metropolitan railways, and was ridiculing the folly of those who feared that the railway projectors were going too fast. "But we shall never get any thanks," he said. "When the thing has been done, and thanks are our due, people will look upon all our work so much as a matter of course that it will never occur to them to think that they owe us any thing. They will have forgotten all their cautions, and will take what they get as though it were simply their due. Nothing astonishes me so much as the fear people feel before a thing is done when I join it with their want of surprise or admiration afterward." In this way even Theodore Burton had resumed his terms of intimacy with Harry Clavering.

Harry had told both Cecilia and Florence of his intended visit to Bolton Street, and they had all become very confidential on the subject. In most such cases we may suppose that a man does not say much to one

woman of the love which another woman has acknowledged for himself. Nor was Harry Clavering at all disposed to make any such boast. But in this case, Lady Ongar herself had told every thing to Mrs. Burton. She had declared her passion, and had declared also her intention of making Harry her husband if he would take her. Every thing was known, and there was no possibility of sparing Lady Ongar's name.

"If I had been her I would not have asked for such a meeting," Cecilia said. The three were at this time sitting together, for Mr. Burton rarely joined them in their conversation.

"I don't know," said Florence. "I do not see why she and Harry should not remain as friends."

"They might be friends without meeting now," said Cecilia.

"Hardly. If the awkwardness were not got over at once, it would never be got over. I almost think she is right, though if I was her I should long to have it over." That was Florence's judgment in the matter. Harry sat between them, like a sheep as he was, very meekly — not without some enjoyment of his sheepdom, but still feeling that he was a sheep. At half past eight he started up, having already been told that a cab was waiting for him at the door. He pressed Cecilia's hand as he went, indicating his feeling that he had before him an affair of some magnitude, and then, of course, had a word or two to say to Florence in private on the landing. Oh, those delicious private words, the need for which comes so often during those short halcyon days of one's lifetime! They were so pleasant that Harry would fain have returned to repeat them after he was seated in his cab; but the inevitable wheels carried him onward with cruel velocity, and he was in Bolton Street before the minutes had sufficed for him to collect his thoughts.

Lady Ongar, when he entered the room, was sitting in her accustomed chair, near a little work-table which she always used, and did not rise to meet him. It was a pretty chair, soft and easy, made with a back for lounging, but with no arms to impede the circles of a lady's hoop. Harry knew the chair well, and had spoken of its graceful comfort in some of his visits to Bolton Street. She was seated there when he entered; and though he was not sufficiently experienced in the secrets of feminine attire to know at once that she had dressed herself with care, he did perceive that she was very charming, not only by force of her own beauty, but by the aid also of her dress.

And yet she was in deep mourning—in the deepest mourning; nor was there any thing about her of which complaint might fairly be made by those who do complain on such subjects. Her dress was high round her neck, and the cap on her head was indisputably a widow's cap; but enough of her brown hair was to be seen to tell of its rich loveliness; and the black dress was so made as to show the full perfection of her form; and with it all there was that graceful feminine brightness that care and money can always give, and which will not come without care and money. It might be well, she had thought, to surrender her income, and become poor and dowdy hereafter, but there could be no reason why Harry Clavering should not be made to know all that he had lost.

"Well, Harry," she said, as he stepped up to her and took her offered hand, "I am glad that you have come that I may congratulate you. Better late than never, eh, Harry?"

How was he to answer her when she spoke to him in this strain? "I hope it is not too late," he said, hardly knowing what the words were which were coming from his mouth.

"Nay, that is for you to say. I can do it heartily, Harry, if you mean that. And why not? Why should I not wish you happy? I have always liked you—have always wished for your happiness. You believe that I am sincere when I congratulate you, do you not?"

"Oh yes, you are always sincere."

"I have always been so to you. As to any sincerity beyond that, we need say nothing now. I have always been your good friend—to the best of my ability. Ah! Harry, you do not know how much I have thought of your welfare—how much I do think of it. But never mind that. Tell me something now of this Florence Burton of yours. Is she tall?" I believe that Lady Ongar, when she asked this question, knew well that Florence was short of stature.

"No, she is not tall," said Harry.

"What—a little beauty? Upon the whole, I think I agree with your taste. The most lovely women that I have ever seen have been small, bright, and perfect in their proportions. It is very rare that a tall woman has a perfect figure." Julia's own figure was quite perfect. "Do you remember Constance Vane. Nothing ever exceeded her beauty." Now Constance Vane—she, at least, who had in those days been Constance Vane, but who now was the stout

mother of two or three children—had been a waxen doll of a girl, whom Harry had known, but had neither liked nor admired. But she was highly bred, and belonged to the cream of English fashion; she had possessed a complexion as pure in its tints as are the interior leaves of a blush rose, and she had never had a thought in her head, and hardly ever a word on her lips. She and Florence Burton were as poles asunder in their differences. Harry felt this at once, and had an indistinct notion that Lady Ongar was as well aware of the fact as was he himself. "She is not a bit like Constance Vane," he said.

"Then what is she like? If she is more beautiful than what Miss Vane used to be, she must be lovely indeed."

"She has no pretensions of that kind," said Harry, almost sulkily.

"I have heard that she was so very beautiful!" Lady Ongar had never heard a word about Florence's beauty—not a word. She knew nothing personally of Florence beyond what Mrs. Burton had told her. But who will not forgive her the little deceit that was necessary to her little revenge?

"I don't know how to describe her," said Harry. "I hope the time may soon come when you will see her, and be able to judge for yourself."

"I hope so too. It shall not be my fault if I do not like her."

"I do not think you can fail to like her. She is very clever, and that will go farther with you than mere beauty. Not but what I think her very—very pretty."

"Ah! I understand. She reads a great deal, and that sort of thing. Yes, that is very nice. But I shouldn't have thought that that would have taken you. You used not to care much for talent and learning—not in women, I mean."

"I don't know about that," said Harry, looking very foolish.

"But a contrast is what you men always like. Of course I ought not to say that, but you will know what I am thinking. A clever, highly-educated woman like Miss Burton will be a much better companion to you than I could have been. You see I am very frank, Harry." She wished to make him talk freely about himself, his future days, and his past days, while he was simply anxious to say on these subjects as little as possible. Poor woman! The excitement of having a passion which she might indulge was over with her—at any rate, for the present. She had played her game and had lost woefully; but before she retired altogether from the gaming-table she could not

keep herself from longing for a last throw of the dice.

"These things, I fear, go very much by chance," said Harry.

"You do not mean me to suppose that you are taking Miss Burton by chance. That would be as uncomplimentary to her as to yourself."

"Chance, at any rate, has been very good to me in this instance."

"Of that I am sure. Do not suppose that I am doubting that. It is not only the paradise that you have gained, but the pandemonium that you have escaped!" Then she laughed slightly, but the laughter was uneasy, and made her angry with herself. She had especially determined to be at ease during this meeting, and was conscious that any falling off in that respect on her part would put into his hands the power which she was desirous of exercising.

"You are determined to rebuke me, I see," said he. "If you choose to do so, I am prepared to bear it. My defence, if I have a defence, is one that I cannot use."

"And what would be your defence?"

"I have said that I cannot use it."

"As if I did not understand it all! What you mean to say is this—that when your good stars sent you in the way of Florence Burton, you had been ill treated by her who would have made your pandemonium for you, and that she therefore—she who came first, and behaved so badly, can have no right to find fault with you in that you have obeyed your good stars and done so well for yourself. That is what you call your defence. It would be perfect, Harry, perfect, if you had only whispered to me a word of Miss Burton when I first saw you after my return home. It is odd to me that you should not have written to me and told me when I was abroad with my husband. It would have comforted me to have known that the wound which I had given had been cured—that is, if there was a wound."

"You know that there was a wound."

"At any rate, it was not mortal. But when are such wounds mortal? When are they more than skin-deep?"

"I can say nothing as to that now."

"No, Harry, of course you can say nothing. Why should you be made to say any thing? You are fortunate and happy, and have all that you want. I have nothing that I want."

There was a reality in the tone of sorrow in which this was spoken which melted him at once, and the more so in that there was so much in her grief which could not but be

flattering to his vanity. "Do not say that, Lady Ongar," he exclaimed.

"But I do say it. What have I got in the world that is worth having? My possessions are ever so many thousands a year—and a damaged name."

"I deny that. I deny it altogether. I do not think that there is one who knows of your story who believes ill of you."

"I could tell you of one, Harry, who thinks very ill of me—nay, of two; and they are both in this room. Do you remember how you used to teach me that terribly conceited bit of Latin—*Nil conscire sibi*? Do you suppose that I can boast that I never grow pale as I think of my own fault? I am thinking of it always, and my heart is ever becoming paler and paler. And as to the treatment of others—I wish I could make you know what I suffered when I was fool enough to go to that place in Surrey. The coachman who drives me no doubt thinks that I poisoned my husband, and the servant who let you in just now supposes me to be an abandoned woman because you are here."

"You will be angry with me, perhaps, if I say that these feelings are morbid and will die away. They show the weakness which has come from the ill usage you have suffered."

"You are right in part, no doubt. I shall become hardened to it all, and shall fall into some endurable mode of life in time. But I can look forward to nothing. What future have I? Was there ever any one so utterly friendless as I am? Your kind cousin has done that for me; and yet he came here to me the other day, smiling and talking as though he were sure that I should be delighted by his condescension. I do not think that he will ever come again."

"I did not know you had seen him."

"Yes; I saw him, but I did not find much relief from his visit. We won't mind that, however. We can talk about something better than Hugh Clavering during the few minutes that we have together—can we not? And so Miss Burton is very learned and very clever?"

"I did not quite say that."

"But I know she is. What a comfort that will be to you! I am not clever, and I never should have become learned. Oh dear! I had but one merit, Harry—I was fond of you."

"And how did you show it?" He did not speak these words, because he would not triumph over her, nor was he willing to

express that regret on his own part which these words would have implied; but it was impossible for him to avoid a thought of them. He remained silent, therefore, taking up some toy from the table into his hands, as though that would occupy his attention.

"But what a fool I am to talk of it — am I not? And I am worse than a fool. I was thinking of you when I stood up in church to be married — thinking of that offer of your little savings. I used to think of you at every harsh word that I endured — of your modes of life when I sat through those terrible nights by that poor creature's bed — of you when I knew that the last day was coming. I thought of you always, Harry, when I counted up my gains. I never count them up now. Ah! how I thought of you when I came to this house in the carriage which you had provided for me, when I had left you at the station almost without speaking a word to you! I should have been more gracious had I not had you in my thoughts throughout my whole journey home from Florence. And after that I had some comfort in believing that the price of my shame might make you rich without shame. Oh, Harry, I have been disappointed! You will never understand what I felt when first that evil woman told me of Miss Burton."

"Oh, Julia, what am I to say?"

"You can say nothing; but I wonder that you had not told me."

"How could I tell you? Would it not have seemed that I was vain enough to have thought of putting you on your guard?"

"And why not? But never mind. Do not suppose that I am rebuking you. As I said in my letter, we are quits now, and there is no place for scolding on either side. We are quits now; but I am punished and you are rewarded."

Of course he could not answer this. Of course he was hard pressed for words. Of course he could neither acknowledge that he had been rewarded, nor assert that a share of the punishment of which she spoke had fallen upon him also. This was the revenge with which she had intended to attack him. That she should think that he had in truth been punished and not rewarded, was very natural. Had he been less quick in forgetting her after her marriage, he would have had his reward without any punishment. If such were her thoughts, who shall quarrel with her on that account?

"I have been very frank with you," she

continued. "Indeed, why should I not be so? People talk of a lady's secret, but my secret has been no secret from you. That I was made to tell it under — under — what I will call an error, was your fault, and it is that that has made us quits."

"I know that I have behaved badly to you."

"But then, unfortunately, you know also that I had deserved bad treatment. Well, we will say no more about it. I have been very candid with you, but then I have injured no one by my candor. You have not said a word to me in reply; but then your tongue is tied by your duty to Miss Burton — your duty and your love together, of course. It is all as it should be, and now I will have done. When are you to be married, Harry?"

"No time has been fixed. I am a very poor man, you know."

"Alas! alas! yes. When mischief is done, how badly all the things turn out. You are poor and I am rich, and yet we cannot help each other."

"I fear not."

"Unless I could adopt Miss Burton, and be a sort of mother to her. You would shrink, however, from any such guardianship on my part. But you are clever, Harry, and can work when you please, and will make your way? If Miss Burton keeps you waiting now by any prudent fear on her part, I shall not think so well of her as I am inclined to do."

"The Burtons are all prudent people."

"Tell her, from me, with my love, not to be too prudent. I thought to be prudent, and see what has come of it."

"I will tell her what you say."

"Do, please; and, Harry, look here. Will she accept a little present from me? You, at any rate, for my sake, will ask her to do so. Give her this — it is only a trifle" and she put her hand on a small jewellers' box which was close to her arm upon the table, "and tell her — of course she knows all our story, Harry?"

"Yes, she knows it all."

"Tell her that she whom you have rejected sends it with her kindest wishes to her whom you have taken."

"No, I will not tell her that."

"Why not? It is all true. I have not poisoned the little ring, as the ladies would have done some centuries since. They were grander then than we are now, and perhaps hardly worse, though more cruel. You will bid her take it, will you not?"

"I am sure she will take it without bidding on my part."

"And tell her not to write me any thanks. She and I will both understand that that had better be omitted. If, when I shall see her at some future time as your wife, it shall be on her finger, I shall know that I am thanked." Then Harry rose to go. "I did not mean by that to turn you out, but perhaps it may be as well. I have no more to say; and as for you, you cannot but wish that the penance should be over." Then he pressed her hand, and with some muttered farewell, bade her adieu. Again she did not rise from her chair, but, nodding at him with a sweet smile, let him go without another word.

CHAPTER XLV.

SHOWING WHAT HAPPENED OFF HELIGOLAND.

DURING the six weeks after this, Harry Clavering settled down to his work at the chambers in the Adelphi with exemplary diligence. Florence, having remained a fortnight in town after Harry's return to the sheepfold, and having accepted Lady Ongar's present—not without a long and anxious consultation with her sister-in-law on the subject—had returned in fully restored happiness to Stratton. Mrs. Burton was at Ramsgate with the children, and Mr. Burton was in Russia with reference to a line of railway which was being projected from Moscow to Astracan. It was now September, and Harry, in his letters home, declared that he was the only person left in London. It was hard upon him—much harder than it was upon the Wallikers and other young men whom Fate retained in town; for Harry was a man given to shooting—a man accustomed to pass the autumnal months in a country house. And then, if things had chanced to go one way instead of another, he would have had his own shooting down at Ongar Park with his own friends—admiring him at his heels; or, if not so this year, he would have been shooting elsewhere with the prospect of these rich joys for years to come. As it was, he had promised to stick to the shop, and was sticking to it manfully. Nor do I think that he allowed his mind to revert to those privileges which might have been his at all more frequently than any of my readers would have done in his place. He was sticking to the shop; and, though he greatly disliked the hot desolation of London in those days, being absolutely afraid to frequent his club at such a period of the year,

and though he hated Walliker mortally, he was fully resolved to go on with his work. Who could tell what might be his fate? Perhaps in another ten years he might be carrying that Russian railway on through the deserts of Siberia. Then there came to him suddenly tidings which disturbed all his resolutions, and changed the whole current of his life.

At first there came a telegram to him from the country, desiring him to go down at once to Clavering, but not giving him any reason. Added to the message were these words: "We are all well at the parsonage"—words evidently added in thoughtfulness. But before he had left the office there came to him there a young man from the bank at which his cousin Hugh kept his account, telling him the tidings to which the telegram no doubt referred. Jack Stuart's boat had been lost, and his two cousins had gone to their graves beneath the sea! The master of the boat, and Stuart himself, with a boy, had been saved. The other sailors whom they had with them, and the ship's steward, had perished with the Claverings. Stuart, it seemed, had caused tidings of the accident to be sent to the rector of Clavering and to Sir Hugh's bankers. At the bank they had ascertained that their late customer's cousin was in town, and their messenger had thereupon been sent, first to Bloomsbury Square, and from thence to the Adelphi.

Harry had never loved his cousins. The elder he had greatly disliked, and the younger he would have disliked had he not despised him. But not the less on that account was he inexpressibly shocked when he first heard what had happened. The lad said that there could, as he imagined, be no mistake. The message, had come, as he believed, from Holland, but of that he was not certain. There could, however, be no doubt about the fact. It distinctly stated that both brothers had perished. Harry had known, when he received the message from home, that no train would take him till three in the afternoon, and had therefore remained at the office; but he could not remain now. His head was confused, and he could hardly bring himself to think how this matter would affect himself. When he attempted to explain his absence to an old serious clerk there, he spoke of his own return to the office as certain. He should be back, he supposed, in a week at the farthest. He was thinking then of his promises to Theodore Burton, and had not begun to realize the fact that his whole destiny in life would be changed. He said something,

with a long face, of the terrible misfortune which had occurred, but gave no hint that that misfortune would be important in its consequences to himself. It was not till he had reached his lodgings in Bloomsbury Square that he remembered that his own father was now the baronet, and that he was his father's heir. And then for a moment he thought about the property. He believed that it was entailed, but even of that he was not certain. But if it were unentailed, to whom could his cousin have left it? He endeavored, however, to expel such thoughts from his mind, as though there was something ungenerous in entertaining them. He tried to think of the widow, but even in doing that he could not tell himself that there was much ground for genuine sorrow. No wife had ever had less joy from her husband's society than Lady Clavering had had from that of Sir Hugh. There was no child to mourn the loss — no brother, no unmarried sister. Sir Hugh had had friends — as friendship goes with such men; but Harry could not but doubt whether among them all there would be one who would feel anything like true grief for his loss. And it was the same with Archie. Who in the world would miss Archie Clavering? What man or woman would find the world to be less bright because Archie Clavering was sleeping beneath the waves? Some score of men at his club would talk of poor Clavvy for a few days — would do so without any pretence at the tenderness of sorrow; and then even of Archie's memory there would be an end. Thinking of all this as he was carried down to Clavering, Harry could not but acknowledge that the loss to the world had not been great; but, even while telling himself this, he would not allow himself to take comfort in the prospect of his heirship. Once, perhaps, he did speculate how Florence should bear her honors as Lady Clavering, but this idea he swept away from his thoughts as quickly as he was able.

The tidings had reached the parsonage very late on the previous night — so late that the rector had been disturbed in his bed to receive them. It was his duty to make known to Lady Clavering the fact that she was a widow, but this he could not do till the next morning. But there was little sleep that night for him or for his wife! He knew well enough that the property was entailed. He felt with sufficient strength what it was to become a baronet at a sudden blow, and to become also the owner of the whole Clavering property. He was not slow to think of the removal to

the great house, of the altered prospects of his son, and of the mode of life which would be fitting for himself in future. Before the morning came he had meditated who should be the future rector of Clavering, and had made some calculations as to the expediency of resuming his hunting. Not that he was a heartless man, or that he rejoiced at what had happened. But a man's ideas of generosity change as he advances in age, and the rector was old enough to tell himself boldly that this thing that had happened could not be to him a cause of much grief. He had never loved his cousins, or pretended to love them. His cousin's wife he did love, after a fashion, but in speaking to his own wife of the way in which this tragedy would affect Hermione, he did not scruple to speak of her widowhood as a period of coming happiness.

"She will be cut to pieces," said Mrs. Clavering. "She was attached to him as earnestly as though he had treated her always well."

"I believe it; but not the less will she feel her release, unconsciously; and her life, which has been very wretched, will gradually become easy to her."

Even Mrs. Clavering could not deny that this would be so, and then they reverted to matters which more closely concerned themselves. "I suppose Harry will marry at once now?" said the mother.

"No doubt; it is almost a pity, is it not?" The rector — as we will still call him — was thinking that Florence was hardly a fitting wife for his son with his altered prospects. Ah! what a grand thing it would have been if the Clavering property and Lady Ongar's jointure could have gone together!

"Not a pity at all," said Mrs. Clavering. "You will find that Florence will make him a very happy man."

"I dare say — I dare say. Only he would hardly have taken her had this sad accident happened before he saw her. But, if she will make him happy, that is everything. I have never thought much about money myself. If I find any comfort in these tidings, it is for his sake, not for my own. I would sooner remain as I am." This was not altogether untrue, and yet he was thinking of the big house and the hunting.

"What will be done about the living?" It was early in the morning when Mrs. Clavering asked this question. She had thought much about the living during the night, and so had the rector, but his thoughts had not run in the same direction as hers.

He made no immediate answer, and then she went on with her question. "Do you think that you will keep it in your own hands?"

"Well — no; why should I? I am too idle about it as it is. I should be more so under these altered circumstances."

"I am sure you would do your duty if you resolved to keep it, but I don't see why you should do so."

"Clavering is a great deal better than Humbleton," said the rector. Humbleton was the name of the parish held by Mr. Fielding, his son-in-law.

But the idea here put forward did not suit the idea which was running in Mrs. Clavering's mind. "Edward and Mary are very well off," she said. "His own property is considerable, and I don't think they want anything. Besides, he would hardly like to give up a family living."

"I might ask him at any rate."

"I was thinking of Mr. Saul," said Mrs. Clavering boldly.

"Of Mr. Saul!" The image of Mr. Saul, as rector of Clavering, perplexed the new baronet egregiously.

"Well — yes. He is an excellent clergyman. No one can deny that." Then there was silence between them for a few moments. "In that case, he and Fanny would of course marry. It is no good concealing the fact that she is very fond of him."

"Upon my word, I can't understand it," said the rector.

"It is so; and as to the excellence of his character, there can be no doubt." To this the rector made no answer, but went away into his dressing-room, that he might prepare himself for his walk across the park to the great house. While they were discussing who should be the future incumbent of the living, Lady Clavering was still sleeping in unconsciousness of her fate. Mr. Clavering greatly dreaded the task which was before him, and had made a little attempt to induce his wife to take the office upon herself; but she had explained to him that it would be more seemly that he should be the bearer of the tidings. "It would seem that you were wanting in affection for her if you do not go yourself," his wife had said to him. That the rector of Clavering was master of himself and of his own actions, no one who knew the family ever denied, but the instances in which he declined to follow his wife's advice were not many.

It was about eight o'clock when he went across the park. He had already sent a messenger with a note to beg that Lady

Clavering would be up to receive him. As he would come very early, he had said, perhaps she would see him in her own room. The poor lady had, of course, been greatly frightened by this announcement; but this fear had been good for her, as they had well understood at the rectory; the blow, dreadfully sudden as it must still be, would be somewhat less sudden under this preparation. When Mr. Clavering reached the house the servant was in waiting to show him up stairs to the sitting-room, which Lady Clavering usually occupied when alone. She had been there waiting for him for the last half hour. "Mr. Clavering, what is it?" she exclaimed, as he entered with tidings of death written on his visage. "In the name of heaven, what is it? You have something to tell me of Hugh."

"Dear Hermione," he said, taking her by the hand.

"What is it? Tell me at once. Is he still alive?"

The rector still held her by the hand, but spoke no word. He had been trying as he came across the park to arrange the words in which he should tell his tale, but now it was told without any speech on his part.

"He is dead. Why do you not speak? Why are you so cruel?"

"Dearest Hermione, what am I to say to comfort you?"

What he might say after this was of little moment, for she had fainted. He rang the bell, and then, when the servants were there — the old housekeeper and Lady Clavering's maid — he told to them, rather than to her, what had been their master's fate.

"And Captain Archie?" asked the housekeeper.

The rector shook his head, and the housekeeper knew that the rector was now the baronet. Then they took the poor widow to her own room — should I not rather call her, as I may venture to speak the truth, the enfranchised slave than the poor widow — and the rector, taking up his hat, promised that he would send his wife across to their mistress. His morning's task had been painful, but it had been easily accomplished. As he walked home among the oaks of Clavering Park, he told himself, no doubt, that they were now all his own.

That day at the rectory was very sombre, if it was not actually sad. The greater part of the morning Mrs. Clavering passed with the widow, and, sitting near her sofa, she wrote sundry letters to those who were connected with the family. The longest of these was to Lady Ongar, who was now at

Tenby, and in that there was a pressing request from Hermione that her sister would come to her at Clavering Park. "Tell her," said Lady Clavering, "that all her anger must be over now." But Mrs. Clavering said nothing of Julia's anger. She merely urged the request that Julia would come to her sister. "She will be sure to come," said Mrs. Clavering. "You need have no fear on that head."

"But how can I invite her here, when the house is not my own?"

"Pray do not talk in that way, Hermione. The house will be your own for any time that you may want it. Your husband's relations are your dear friends, are they not?" But this allusion to her husband brought her to another fit of hysterical tears. "Both of them gone," she said, "both of them gone!" Mrs. Clavering knew well that she was not alluding to the two brothers, but to her husband and to her baby. Of poor Archie no one had said a word — beyond that one word spoken by the housekeeper. For her, it had been necessary that she should know who was now the master of Clavering Park.

Twice in the day Mrs. Clavering went over to the big house, and on her second return, late in the evening, she found her son. When she arrived, there had already been some few words on the subject between him and his father.

"You have heard of it, Harry?"

"Yes; a clerk came to me from the banker's."

"Dreadful, is it not? Quite terrible to think of!"

"Indeed it is, sir. I was never so shocked in my life."

"He would go in that cursed boat, though I know that he was advised against it," said the father, holding up his hands and shaking his head. "And now both of them gone — both gone at once!"

"How does she bear it?"

"Your mother is with her now. When I went in the morning — I had written a line, and she expected bad news — she fainted. Of course, I could do nothing. I can hardly say that I told her. She asked the question, and then saw by my face that her fears were well founded. Upon my word, I was glad when she did faint; it was the best thing for her."

"It must have been very painful for you."

"Terrible — terrible;" and the rector shook his head. "It will make a great difference in your prospects, Harry."

"And in your life, sir! So to say, you are as young a man as myself."

"Am I? I believe I was about as young when you were born. But I don't think at all about myself in this matter. I am too old to care to change my manner of living. It won't affect me very much. Indeed, I hardly know yet how it may affect me. Your mother thinks I ought to give up the living. If you were in orders, Harry" —

"I'm very glad, sir, that I am not."

"I suppose so. And there is no need — certainly there is no need. You will be able to do pretty nearly what you like about the property. I shall not care to interfere."

"Yes you will, sir. It feels strange now, but you will soon get used to it. I wonder whether he left a will."

"It can't make any difference to you, you know. Every acre of the property is entailed. She has her settlement. Eight hundred a year, I think it is. She'll not be a rich woman like her sister. I wonder where she'll live. As far as that goes, she might stay at the house, if she likes it. I'm sure your mother wouldn't object."

Harry on this occasion asked no questions about the living, but he also had thought of that. He knew well that his mother would befriend Mr. Saul, and he knew also that his father would ultimately take his mother's advice. As regarded himself, he had no personal objection to Mr. Saul, though he could not understand how his sister should feel any strong regard for such a man.

Edward Fielding would make a better neighbor at the parsonage, and then he thought whether an exchange might not be made. After that, and before his mother's return from the great house, he took a stroll through the park with Fanny. Fanny altogether declined to discuss any of the family prospects as they were affected by the accident which had happened. To her mind the tragedy was so terrible that she could only feel its tragic element. No doubt she had her own thoughts about Mr. Saul as connected with it. "What would he think of this sudden death of the two brothers? How would he feel it? If she could be allowed to talk to him on the matter, what would he say of their fate here and hereafter? Would he go to the great house to offer the consolations of religion to the widow?" Of all this she thought much; but no picture of Mr. Saul as rector of Clavering, or of herself as mistress in her mother's house, presented itself to

her mind. Harry found her to be a dull companion, and he, perhaps, consoled himself with some personal attention to the oak trees, which loomed larger upon him now than they had ever done before.

On the third day the rector went up to London, leaving Harry at the parsonage. It was necessary that lawyers should be visited, and that such facts as to the loss should be proved as were capable of proof. There was no doubt at all as to the fate of Sir Hugh and his brother. The escape of Mr. Stuart and of two of those employed by him prevented the possibility of a doubt. The vessel had been caught in a gale off Heligoland, and had foundered. They had all striven to get into the yacht's boat, but those who had succeeded in doing so had gone down. The master of the yacht had seen the two brothers perish. Those who were saved had been picked up off the spars to which they had attached themselves. There was no doubt in the way of the new baronet, and no difficulty.

Nor was there any will made either by Sir Hugh or his brother. Poor Archie had nothing to leave, and that he should have left no will was not remarkable. But neither had there been much in the power of Sir Hugh to bequeath, nor was there any great cause for a will on his part. Had he left a son, his son would have inherited everything. He had, however, died childless, and his wife was provided for by her settlement. On his marriage he had made the amount settled as small as his wife's friends would accept, and no one who knew the man expected that he would increase the amount after his death. Having been in town for three days, the rector returned, being then in full possession of the title; but this he did not assume till after the second Sunday from the date of the telegram which brought the news.

In the mean time Harry had written to Florence, to whom the tidings were as important as to any one concerned. She had left London very triumphant, quite confident that she had nothing now to fear from Lady Ongar or from any other living woman, having not only forgiven Harry his sins, but having succeeded also in persuading herself that there had been no sins to forgive—having quarrelled with her brother half a dozen times in that he would not accept her arguments on this matter. He too would forgive Harry—had forgiven him—was quite ready to omit all farther remark on the matter—but could not bring himself, when urged by Florence, to admit that her Apollo had been altogether

godlike. Florence had thus left London in triumph, but she had gone with a conviction that she and Harry must remain apart for some indefinite time, which probably must be measured by years. "Let us see at the end of two years," she had said; and Harry had been forced to be content. But how would it be with her now?

Harry of course began his letter by telling her of the catastrophe, with the usual amount of epithets. It was very terrible, awful, shocking—the saddest thing that had ever happened! The poor widow was in a desperate state, and all the Claverings were nearly beside themselves. But when this had been duly said, he allowed himself to go into their own home question. "I cannot fail," he wrote, "to think of this chiefly as it concerns you—or rather as it concerns myself in reference to you. I suppose I shall leave the business now. Indeed my father seems to think that my remaining there would be absurd, and my mother agrees with him. As I am the only son, the property will enable me to live easily without a profession. When I say 'me,' of course you will understand what 'me' means. The better part of 'me' is so prudent that I know she will not accept this view of things without ever so much consideration, and therefore she must come to Clavering to hear it discussed by the elders. For myself, I cannot bear to think that I should take delight in the results of this dreadful misfortune; but how am I to keep myself from being made happy by the feeling that we may now be married without further delay? After all that has passed, nothing will make me happy or even permanently comfortable till I can call you fairly my own. My mother has already said that she hopes you will come here in about a fortnight—that is, as soon as we shall have fallen tolerably into our places again; but she will write herself before that time. I have written a line to your brother, addressed to the office, which I suppose will find him. I have written also to Cecilia. Your brother, no doubt, will hear the news first through the French newspapers." Then he said a little, but a very little, as to their future modes of life, just intimating to her, and no more, that her destiny might probably call upon her to be the mother of a future baronet.

The news had reached Clavering on a Saturday. On the following Sunday every one in the parish had no doubt heard of it, but nothing on the subject was said in church on that day. The rector remained at home during the morning, and the whole

service was performed by Mr. Saul. But on the second Sunday Mr. Fielding had come over from Humbleton, and he preached a sermon on the loss which the parish had sustained in the sudden death of the two brothers. It is perhaps well that such sermons should be preached. The inhabitants of Clavering would have felt that their late lords had been treated like dogs had no word been said of them in the house of God. The nature of their fate had forbidden even the common ceremony of a burial service. It is well that some respect should be maintained from the low in station toward those who are high, even when no respect has been deserved; and, for the widow's sake, it was well that some notice should be taken in Clavering of this death of the head of the Claverings; but I should not myself have liked the duty of preaching a eulogistic sermon on the lives and death of Hugh Clavering and his brother Archie. What had either of them ever done to merit a good word from any man, or to earn the love of any woman? That Sir Hugh had been loved by his wife had come from the nature of the woman, not at all from the qualities of the man. Both of the brothers had lived on the unexpressed theory of consuming, for the benefit of their own backs and their own bellies, the greatest possible amount of those good things which fortune might put in their way. I doubt whether either of them had ever contributed any thing willingly to the comfort or happiness of any human being. Hugh, being powerful by nature, and having a strong will, had tyrannized over all those who were subject to him. Archie, not gifted as was his brother, had been milder, softer, and less actively hateful; but his principle of action had been the same. Everything for himself! Was it not well that two such men should be consigned to the fishes, and that the world — especially the Clavering world, and that poor widow, who now felt herself to be so inexpressibly wretched, when her period of comfort was in truth only commencing — was it not well that the world and Clavering should be well quit of them? That idea is the one which one would naturally have felt inclined to put into one's sermon on such an occasion; and then to sing some song of rejoicing — either to do that, or to leave the matter alone.

But not so are such sermons preached, and not after that fashion did the young clergyman who had married the first cousin of these Claverings buckle himself to the subject. He indeed had, I think, but little

difficulty, either inwardly with his conscience, or outwardly with his subject. He possessed the power of a pleasant, easy flow of words, and of producing tears, if not from other eyes, at any rate from his own. He drew a picture of the little ship amid the storm, and of God's hand as it moved in its anger upon the waters; but of the cause of that divine wrath and its direction he said nothing. Then, of the suddenness of death and its awfulness he said much, not insisting as he did so, on the necessity of repentance for salvation, as far as those two poor sinners were concerned. No, indeed; how could any preacher have done that? But he improved the occasion by telling those around him that they should so live as to be ever ready for the hand of death. If that were possible, where then indeed would be the victory of the grave? And at last he came to the master and lord whom they had lost. Even here there was no difficulty for him. The heir had gone first, and then the father and his brother. Who among them would not pity the bereaved mother and the widow? Who among them would not remember with affection the babe whom they had seen at that font, and with respect the landlord under whose rule they had lived? How pleasant it must be to ask those questions which no one can rise to answer! Farmer Gubbins, as he sat by, listening with what power of attention had been vouchsafed to him, felt himself to be somewhat moved, but soon released himself from the task, and allowed his mind to run away into other ideas. The rector was a kindly man and a generous. The rector would allow him to inclose that little bit of common land, that was to be taken in, without adding anything to his rent. The rector would be there on audit days, and things would be very pleasant. Farmer Gubbins, when the slight murmuring gurgle of the preacher's tears was heard, shook his own head by way of a responsive wail; but at that moment he was congratulating himself on the coming comfort of the new reign. Mr. Fielding, however, got great credit for his own sermon; and it did, probably, more good than harm — unless, indeed, we should take into our calculation, in giving our award on this subject, the permanent utility of all truth, and the permanent injury of all falsehood.

Mr. Fielding remained at the parsonage during the greater part of the following week, and then there took place a great deal of family conversation respecting the future incumbent of the living. At these family conclaves, however, Fanny was not

asked to be present. Mrs. Clavering, who knew well how to do such work, was gradually bringing her husband round to endure the name of Mr. Saul. Twenty times had he asserted that he could not understand it; but, whether or no such understanding might ever be possible, he was beginning to recognize it as true that the thing not understood was a fact. His daughter Fanny was positively in love with Mr. Saul, and that to such an extent that her mother believed her happiness to be involved in it. "I can't understand it—upon my word I can't," said the rector for the last time, and then he gave way. There was now the means of giving an ample provision for the lovers, and that provision was to be given.

Mr. Fielding shook his head—not, in this instance, as to Fanny's predilection for Mr. Saul, though in discussing that matter with his own wife he had shaken his head very often, but he shook it now with reference to the proposed change. He was very well where he was. And although Clavering was better than Humbleton, it was not so much better as to induce him to throw his own family over by proposing to send Mr. Saul among them. Mr. Saul was an excellent clergyman, but perhaps his uncle, who had given him his living, might not like Mr. Saul. Thus it was decided in these conclaves that Mr. Saul was to be the future rector of Clavering.

In the mean time poor Fanny moped—wretched in her solitude, anticipating no such glorious joys as her mother was preparing for her; and Mr. Saul was preparing with energy for his departure into foreign parts.

CHAPTER XLV.

IS SHE MAD?

LADY ONGAR was at Tenby when she received Mrs. Clavering's letter, and had not heard of the fate of her brother-in-law till the news reached her in that way. She had gone down to a lodging at Tenby with no attendant but one maid, and was preparing herself for the great surrender of her property which she meditated. Hitherto she had heard nothing from the Courtons or their lawyer as to the offer she had made about Ongar Park; but the time had been short, and lawyer's work, as she knew, was never done in a hurry. She had gone to Tenby, flying, in truth, from the loneliness of London to the loneliness of the sea-shore, but expecting she knew not what comfort

from the change. She would take with her no carriage, and there would, as she thought, be excitement even in that. She would take long walks by herself—she would read—nay, if possible, she would study, and bring herself to some habits of industry. Hitherto she had failed in every thing, but now she would try if some mode of success might not be open to her. She would ascertain, too, on what smallest sum she could live respectably and without penury, and would keep only so much out of Lord Ongar's wealth.

But hitherto her life at Tenby had not been successful. Solitary days were longer there even than they had been in London. People stared at her more; and, though she did not own it to herself, she missed greatly the comforts of her London house. As for reading, I doubt whether she did much better by the sea-side than she had done in the town. Men and women say that they will read, and think so—those, I mean, who have acquired no habit of reading—believing the work to be, of all works, the easiest. It may be work, they think, but of all works it must be the easiest of achievement. Given the absolute faculty of reading, the task of going through the pages of a book must be, of all tasks, the most certainly within the grasp of the man or woman who attempts it. Alas! no; if the habit be not there, of all tasks it is the most difficult. If a man have not acquired the habit of reading till he be old, he shall sooner in his old age learn to make shoes than learn the adequate use of a book. And worse again—under such circumstances the making of shoes shall be more pleasant to him than the reading of a book. Let those who are not old—who are still young, ponder this well. Lady Ongar, indeed, was not old, by no means too old to clothe herself in new habits; but even she was old enough to find that the doing so was a matter of much difficulty. She had her books around her; but, in spite of her books, she was sadly in want of some excitement when the letter from Clavering came to her relief.

It was indeed a relief. Her brother-in-law dead, and he also who had so lately been her suitor! These two men whom she had so lately seen in lusty health—proud with all the pride of outward life—had both, by a stroke of the winds, been turned into nothing. A terrible retribution had fallen upon her enemy—for as her enemy she had ever regarded Hugh Clavering since her husband's death. She took no joy in this retribution. There was no feeling of triumph at her heart in that he had perished.

She did not tell herself that she was glad, either for her own sake or for her sister's. But mingled with the awe she felt there was a something of unexpressed and inexpressible relief. Her present life was very grievous to her, and now had occurred that which would open to her new hopes and a new mode of living. Her brother-in-law had oppressed her by his very existence, and now he was gone. Had she had no brother-in-law who ought to have welcomed her, her return to England would not have been terrible to her as it had been. Her sister would be now restored to her, and her solitude would probably be at an end. And then the very excitement occasioned by the news was salutary to her. She was, in truth, shocked. As she said to her maid, she felt it to be very dreadful. But, nevertheless, the day on which she received those tidings was less wearisome to her than any other of the days that she had passed at Tenby.

Poor Archie! Some feeling of a tear, some half-formed drop that was almost a tear, came to her eye as she thought of his fate. How foolish he had always been, how unintelligent, how deficient in all those qualities which recommend men to women! But the very memory of his deficiencies created something like a tenderness in his favor. Hugh was disagreeable, nay, hateful, by reason of the power which he possessed; whereas Archie was not hateful at all, and was disagreeable simply because nature had been a niggard to him. And then he had professed himself to be her lover. There had not been much in this; for he had come, of course, for her money; but even when that is the case a woman will feel something for the man who has offered to link his lot with hers. Of all those to whom the fate of the two brothers had hitherto been matter of moment, I think that Lady Ongar felt more than any other for the fate of poor Archie.

And how would it affect Harry Clavering? She had desired to give Harry all the good things of the world, thinking that they would become him well — thinking that they would become him very well as reaching him from her hand. Now he would have them all, but would not have them from her. Now he would have them all, and would share them with Florence Burton. Ah! if she could have been true to him in those early days — in those days when she had feared his poverty — would it not have been well now with her also? The measure of her retribution was come full home to her at last! Sir Harry Clavering! She tried the name, and found

that it sounded very well. And she thought of the figure of the man and of his nature, and she knew that he would bear it with a becoming manliness. Sir Harry Clavering would be somebody in his county — would be a husband of whom his wife would be proud as he went about among his tenants and his gamekeepers, and perhaps on wider and better journeys, looking up the voters of his neighbourhood. Yes, happy would be the wife of Sir Harry Clavering. He was a man who would delight in sharing his house, his hopes, his schemes and councils with his wife. He would find a companion in his wife. He would do honor to his wife and make much of her. He would like to see her go bravely. And then, if children came, how tender he would be to them! Whether Harry could ever have become a good head to a poor household might be doubtful, but no man had ever been born fitter for the position which he was now called upon to fill. It was thus that Lady Ongar thought of Harry Clavering as she owned to herself that the full measure of her just retribution had come home to her.

Of course she would go at once to Clavering Park. She wrote to her sister saying so, and the next day she started. She started so quickly on her journey that she reached the house not very many hours after her own letter. She was there when the rector started for London, and there when Mr. Fielding preached his sermon; but she did not see Mr. Clavering before he went, nor was she present to hear the eloquence of the younger clergyman. Till after that Sunday the only member of the family she had seen was Mrs. Clavering, who spent some period of every day up at the great house. Mrs. Clavering had not hitherto seen Lady Ongar since her return, and was greatly astonished at the change which so short a time had made. "She is handsomer than ever she was," Mrs. Clavering said to the rector; "but it is that beauty which some women carry into middle life, and not the loveliness of youth." Lady Ongar's manner was cold and stately when first she met Mrs. Clavering. It was on the morning of her marriage when they had last met — when Julia Brabazon was resolving that she would look like a countess, and that to be a countess should be enough for her happiness. She could not but remember this now, and was unwilling at first to make confession of her failure by any meekness of conduct. It behooved her to be proud, at any rate till she should know how this new Lady Clavering would receive her. And then it was more than probable that

this new Lady Clavering knew all that had taken place between her and Harry. It behooved her, therefore, to hold her head on high.

But, before the week was over, Mrs. Clavering—for we will still call her so—had broken Lady Ongar's spirit by her kindness, and the poor woman who had so much to bear had brought herself to speak of the weight of her burden. Julia had, on one occasion, called her Lady Clavering, and for the moment this had been allowed to pass without observation. The widowed lady was then present, and no notice of the name was possible. But soon afterward Mrs. Clavering made her little request on the subject. "I do not quite know what the custom may be," she said, "but do not call me so just yet. It will only be reminding Hermy of her bereavement."

"She is thinking of it always," said Julia. "No doubt she is; but still the new name would wound her. And, indeed, it perplexes me also. Let it come by and by, when we are more settled."

Lady Ongar had truly said that her sister was as yet always thinking of her bereavement. To her now it was as though the husband she had lost had been a paragon among men. She could only remember of him his manliness, his power—a dignity of presence which he possessed—and the fact that to her he had been everything. She thought of that last and vain caution which she had given him when with her hardly-permitted last embrace she had besought him to take care of himself. She did not remember now how coldly that embrace had been received, how completely those words had been taken as meaning nothing, how he had left her not only without a sign of affection, but without an attempt to repress the evidences of his indifference. But she did remember that she had had her arm upon his shoulder, and tried to think of that embrace as though it had been sweet to her. And she did remember how she had stood at the window, listening to the sounds of the wheels which took him off, and watching his form as long as her eye could rest upon it. Ah! what falsehoods she told herself now of her love to him, and of his goodness to her—pious falsehoods which would surely tend to bring some comfort to her wounded spirit.

But her sister could hardly bear to hear the praises of Sir Hugh. When she found how it was to be, she resolved that she would bear them—bear them, and not contradict them; but her struggle in doing so was great, and was almost too much for her.

"He had judged me and condemned me," she said at last, "and therefore, as a matter of course, we were not such friends when we last met as we used to be before my marriage."

"But Julia, there was much for which you owed him gratitude."

"We will say nothing about that now, Hermy."

"I do not know why your mouth should be closed on such a subject because he has gone. I should have thought that you would be glad to acknowledge his kindness to you. But you were always hard."

"Perhaps I am hard."

"And twice he asked you to come here since your return, but you would not come."

"I have come now, Hermy, when I have thought that I might be of use."

"He felt it when you would not come before. I know he did." Lady Ongar could not but think of the way in which he had manifested his feelings on the occasion of his visit to Bolton Street. "I never could understand why you were so bitter."

"I think, dear, we had better not discuss that. I also have had much to bear—I as well as you. What you have borne has come in nowise from your own fault."

"No, indeed; I did not want him to go. I would have given anything to keep him at home."

Her sister had not been thinking of the suffering which had come to her from the loss of her husband, but of her former miseries. This, however, she did not explain. "No," Lady Ongar continued to say, "you have nothing for which to blame yourself, whereas I have much—indeed everything. If we are to remain together, as I hope we may, it will be better for us both that by-gones should be by-gones."

"Do you mean that I am never to speak of Hugh?"

"No, I by no means intend that; but I would rather that you should not refer to his feelings toward me. I think he did not quite understand the sort of life that I led while my husband was alive, and that he judged me amiss. Therefore I would have by-gones be by-gones."

Three or four days after this, when the question of leaving Clavering Park was being mooted, the elder sister started a difficulty as to money matters. An offer had been made to her by Mrs. Clavering to remain at the great house, but this she had declined, alleging that the place would be distasteful to her after her husband's death. She, poor soul! did not allege that it had been made distasteful to her forever by the

solitude which she had endured there during her husband's lifetime! She would go away somewhere, and live as best she might upon her jointure. It was not very much, but it would be sufficient. She did not see, she said, how she could live with her sister, because she did not wish to be dependent. Julia, of course, would live in a style to which she could make no pretence.

Mrs. Clavering, who was present, as was also Lady Ongar, declared that she saw no such difficulty. "Sisters together," she said, "need hardly think of a difference in such matters."

Then it was that Lady Ongar first spoke to either of them of her half-formed resolution about her money, and then too, for the first time, did she come down altogether from that high horse on which she had been, as it were, compelled to mount herself while in Mrs. Clavering's presence. "I think I must explain," said she, "something of what I mean to do—about my money, that is. I do not think that there will be much difference between me and Hermy in that respect."

"That is nonsense," said her sister, fretfully.

"There will be a difference in income certainly," said Mrs. Clavering, "but I do not see that that need create any uncomfortable feeling."

"Only one doesn't like to be dependent," said Hermione.

"You shall not be asked to give up any of your independence," said Julia with a smile—a melancholy smile, that gave but little sign of pleasantness within. Then, on a sudden, her face became stern and hard. "The fact is," she said, "I do not intend to keep Lord Ongar's money."

"Not to keep your income!" said Hermione.

"No; I will give it back to them—or at least the greater part of it. Why should I keep it?"

"It is your own," said Mrs. Clavering.

"Yes, legally it is my own. I know that. And when there was some question whether it should not be disputed, I would have fought for it to the last shilling. Somebody—I suppose it was the lawyer—wanted to keep from me the place in Surrey. I told them that then I would not abandon my right to an inch of it. But they yielded, and now I have given them back the house."

"You have given it back!" said her sister.

"Yes; I have said they may have it. It is of no use to me. I hate the place."

"You have been very generous," said Mrs. Clavering.

"But that will not affect your income," said Hermione.

"No, that would not affect my income." Then she paused, not knowing how to go on with the story of her purpose.

"If I may say so, Lady Ongar," said Mrs. Clavering, "I would not, if I were you, take any steps in so important a matter without advice."

"Who is there that can advise me? Of course the lawyer tells me that I ought to keep it all. It is his business to give such advice as that. But what does he know of what I feel? How can he understand me? How, indeed, can I expect that any one shall understand me?"

"But it is possible that people should misunderstand you," said Mrs. Clavering.

"Exactly. That is just what he says. But, Mrs. Clavering, I care nothing for that. I care nothing for what anybody says or thinks. What is it to me what they say?"

"I should have thought it was everything," said her sister.

"No, it is nothing—nothing at all."

Then she was again silent, and was unable to express herself. She could not bring herself to declare in words that self-condemnation of her own conduct which was now weighing so heavily upon her. It was not that she wished to keep back her own feelings either from her sister or from Mrs. Clavering, but that the words in which to express them were wanting to her.

"And have they accepted the house?" Mrs. Clavering asked.

"They must accept it. What else can they do? They cannot make me call it mine if I do not choose. If I refuse to take the income which Mr. Courton's lawyer pays in to my bankers, they cannot compel me to have it."

"But you are not going to give that up too?" said her sister.

"I am. I will not have his money—not more than enough to keep me from being a scandal to his family. I will not have it. It is a curse to me, and has been from the first. What right have I to all that money, because—because—because"—She could not finish her sentence, but turned away from them, and walked by herself to the window.

Lady Clavering looked at Mrs. Clavering as though she thought that her sister was mad. "Do you understand her?" said Lady Clavering, in a whisper.

"I think I do," said the other. "I think

I know what is passing in her mind." Then she followed Lady Ongar across the room, and, taking her gently by the arm, tried to comfort her—to comfort her and to argue with her as to the rashness of that which she proposed to do. She endeavored to explain to the poor woman how it was that she should at this moment be wretched, and anxious to do that which, if done, would put it out of her power afterward to make herself useful in the world. It shocked the prudence of Mrs. Clavering—this idea of abandoning money, the possession of which was questioned by no one. "They do not want it, Lady Ongar," she said.

"That has nothing to do with it," answered the other.

"And nobody has any suspicion but what it is honorably and fairly your own."

"But does anybody ever think how I got it?" said Lady Ongar, turning sharply round upon Mrs. Clavering. "You—you—you—do you dare to tell me what you think of the way in which it became mine? Could you bear it, if it had become yours after such a fashion? I cannot bear it, and I will not." She was now speaking with so much violence that her sister was awed into silence, and Mrs. Clavering herself found a difficulty in answering her.

"Whatever may have been the past," said she, "the question now is how to do the best for the future."

"I had hoped," continued Lady Ongar, without noticing what was said to her, "I had hoped to make every thing straight by giving his money to another. You know to whom I mean, and so does Hermyn. I thought, when I returned, that, bad as I had been, I might still do some good in the world. But it is as they tell us in the sermons. One cannot make good come out of evil. I have done evil, and nothing but evil has come from the evil which I have done. Nothing but evil will come from it. As for being useful in the world, I know of what use I am! When women hear how wretched I have been, they will be unwilling to sell themselves as I did." Then she made her way to the door, and left the room, going out with quiet steps, and closing the lock behind her without a sound.

"I did not know that she was such as that," said Mrs. Clavering.

"Nor did I. She has never spoken in that way before."

Poor soul! Hermyn, you see there are those in the world whose sufferings are worse than yours."

"I don't know," said Lady Clavering. "She never lost what I have lost—never."

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"She has lost what I am sure you never will lose, her own self-esteem. But, Hermyn, you should be good to her. We must all be good to her. Will it not be better that you should stay with us for a while—both of you?"

"What! here at the park?"

"We will make room for you at the rectory if you would like it."

"Oh no, I will go away. I shall be better away. I suppose she will not be like that often, will she?"

"She was much moved just now."

"And what does she mean about her income? She cannot be in earnest."

"She is in earnest now."

"And cannot it be prevented? Only think—if, after all, she were to give up her jointure! Mrs. Clavering, you do not think she is mad, do you?"

Mrs. Clavering said what she could to comfort the elder and weaker sister on this subject, explaining to her that the Courtons would not be at all likely to take advantage of any wild generosity on the part of Lady Ongar, and then she walked home across the park, meditating on the character of the two sisters.

CHAPTER XLVI.

MADAME GORDELOUP RETIRES FROM BRITISH DIPLOMACY.

THE reader must be asked to accompany me once more to that room in Mount Street in which poor Archie practised diplomacy, and whither the courageous Doodles was carried prisoner in those moments in which he was last seen of us. The Spy was now sitting alone before her desk, scribbling with all her energy—writing letters on foreign policy, no doubt, to all the courts of Europe, but especially to that Russian court to which her services were more especially due. She was hard at work, when there came the sound of a step upon the stairs. The practised ear of the Spy became erect, and she at once knew who was her visitor. It was not one with whom diplomacy would much avail, or who was likely to have money ready under his glove for her behoof. "Ah! Edouard, is that you? I am glad you have come," she said, as Count Pateroff entered the room.

"Yes, it is I. I got your note yesterday."

"You are good—very good. You are always good." Sophie, as she said this, went on very rapidly with her letters—so rapidly that her hand seemed to run about

the paper wildly. Then she flung down her pen, and folded the paper on which she had been writing with marvellous quickness. There was an activity about the woman in all her movements which was wonderful to watch. "There," she said, "that is done; now we can talk. Ah! I have nearly written off my fingers this morning." Her brother smiled, but said nothing about the letters. He never allowed himself to allude in any way to her professional duties.

"So you are going to St. Petersburg?" he said.

"Well—yes, I think. Why should I remain here spending money with both hands and through the nose?" At this idea the brother again smiled pleasantly. He had never seen his sister to be culpably extravagant as she now described herself. "Nothing to get and every thing to lose," she went on saying.

"You know your own affairs best," he answered.

"Yes, I know my own affairs. If I remained here I should be taken away to that black building there;" and she pointed in the direction of the workhouse, which fronts so gloomily upon Mount Street. "You would not come to take me out."

The count smiled again. "You are too clever for that, Sophie, I think."

"Ah! it is well for a woman to be clever, or she must starve—yes, starve! Such a one as I must starve in this accursed country if I were not what you call clever." The brother and sister were talking in French, and she spoke now almost as rapidly as she had written. "They are beasts and fools, and as awkward as bulls—yes, as bulls. I hate them—I hate them all. Men, women, children, they are all alike. Look at the street out there. Though it is summer, I shiver when I look out at its blackness. It is the ugliest nation! And they understand nothing. Oh, how I hate them!"

"They are not without merit. They have got money."

"Money—yes. They have got money, and they are so stupid you may take it from under their eyes. They will not see you. But of their own hearts they will give you nothing. You see that black building—the workhouse. I call it Little England. It is just the same. The naked, hungry, poor wretches lie at the door, and the great fat beadles swell about like turkey-cocks inside."

"You have been here long enough to know, at any rate."

"Yes, I have been here long—too long.

I have made my life a wilderness, staying here in this country of barracks. And what have I got for it? I came back because of that woman, and she has thrown me over. That is your fault—yours—yours!"

"And you have sent for me to tell me that again?"

"No, Edouard. I sent for you that you might see your sister once more—that I might once more see my brother." This she said leaning forward on the table, on which her arms rested, and looking steadfastly into his face with eyes moist—just moist, with a tear in each. Whether Edouard was too unfeeling to be moved by this show of affection, or whether he gave more credit to his sister's histrionic powers than to those of her heart, I will not say, but he was altogether irresponsive to her appeal. "You will be back again before long," he said.

"Never! I shall come back to this accursed country never again. No, I am going once and for all. I will soil myself with the mud of its gutters no more. I came for the sake of Julie; and now—how has she treated me?" Edouard shrugged his shoulders. "And you—how has she treated you?"

"Never mind me."

"Ah! but I must mind you. Only that you would not let me manage, it might be yours now—yes, all. Why did you come down to that accursed island?"

"It was my way to play my game. Leave that alone, Sophie." And there came a frown over the brother's brow.

"Your way to play your game! Yes; and what has become of mine? You have destroyed mine, but you think nothing of that. After all that I have gone through, to have nothing; and through you—my brother! Ah! that is the hardest of all—when I was putting all things in train for you."

"You are always putting things in train. Leave your trains alone, where I am concerned."

"But why did you come to that place in the accursed island? I am ruined by that journey. Yes, I am ruined. You will not help me to get a shilling from her—even for my expenses."

"Certainly not. You are clever enough to do your own work without my aid."

"And is that all from a brother? Well! And, now that they have drowned themselves—the two Claverings—the fool and the brute, and she can do what she pleases"—

"She could always do as she pleased since Lord Ongar died."

"Yes; but she is more lonely than ever now. That cousin who is the greatest fool of all, who might have had every thing — mon Dieu! yes, every thing — she would have given it all to him with a sweep of her hand if he would have taken it. He is to marry himself to a little brown girl who has not a shilling. No one but an Englishman could make follies so abominable as these. Ah! I am sick — I am sick when I remember it!" And Sophie gave unmistakable signs of a grief which could hardly have been self-interested. But, in truth, she suffered pain in seeing a good game spoiled. It was not that she had any wish for Harry Clavering's welfare. Had he gone to the bottom of the sea in the same boat with his cousins, the tidings of his fate would have been pleasurable to her rather than otherwise. But when she saw such cards thrown away as he had held in his hand, she encountered that sort of suffering which a good player feels when he sits behind the chair of one who plays up to his adversary's trump, and makes no tricks of his own kings and aces.

"He may marry himself to the devil if he please — it is nothing to me," said the count.

"But she is there — by herself — at that place — what is it called? Ten — bie. Will you not go now, when you can do no harm?"

"No, I will not go now."

"And in a year she will have taken some other one for her husband."

"What is that to me? But look here, Sophie, for you may as well understand me at once, if I were ever to think of Lady Ongar again as my wife, I should not tell you."

"And why not tell me — your sister?"

"Because it would do me no good. If you had not been there she would have been my wife now."

"Edouard!"

"What I say is true. But I do not want to reproach you because of that. Each of us was playing his own game, and your game was not my game. You are going now, and if I play my game again I can play it alone."

Upon hearing this, Sophie sat a while in silence, looking at him. "You will play it alone," she said at last. "You would rather do that?"

"Much rather, if I play any game at all."

"And you will give me something to go?"

"Not one sou."

"You will not — not a sou?"

"Not half a sou — for you to go or stay. Sophie, are you not a fool to ask me for money?"

"And you are a fool — a fool who knows nothing. You need not look at me like that. I am not afraid. I shall remain here. I shall stay and do as the lawyer tells me. He says that if I bring my action she must pay me for my expenses. I will bring my action. I am not going to leave it all to you. No. Do you remember those days in Florence? I have not been paid yet, but I will be paid. One hundred and seventy-five thousand francs a year — and, after all, I am to have none of it! Say — should it become yours, will you do something for your sister?"

"Nothing at all — nothing. Sophie, do you think I am fool enough to bargain in such a matter?"

"Then I will stay. Yes, I will bring my action. All the world shall hear, and they shall know how you have destroyed me and yourself. Ah! you think I am afraid — that I will not spend my money. I will spend all — all — all; and I will be revenged."

"You may go or stay, it is the same thing to me. Now, if you please, I will take my leave." And he got up from his chair to leave her.

"It is the same thing to you?"

"Quite the same."

"Then I will stay, and she shall hear my name every day of her life — every hour. She shall be so sick of me and of you that — that — that — Oh, Edouard!" This last appeal was made to him because he was already at the door, and could not be stopped in any other way.

"What else have you to say, my sister?"

"Oh, Edouard, what would I not give to see all those riches yours? Has it not been my dearest wish? Edouard, you are ungrateful. All men are ungrateful." Now, having succeeded in stopping him, she buried her face in the corner of the sofa and wept plentifully. It must be presumed that her acting before her brother must have been altogether thrown away; but the acting was, nevertheless, very good.

"If you are in truth going to St. Petersburg," he said, "I will bid you adieu now. If not — *au revoir*."

"I am going. Yes, Edouard, I am. I

cannot bear this country longer. My heart is being torn to pieces. All my affections are outraged. Yes, I am going — perhaps on Monday — perhaps on Monday week. But I go in truth. My brother, adieu. Then she got up, and, putting a hand on each of his shoulders, lifted up her face to be kissed. He embraced her in the manner proposed, and turned to leave her. But before he went she made to him one other petition, holding him by the arm as she did so. "Edouard, you can lend me twenty Napoleons till I am at St. Petersburg?"

"No, Sophie, no."

"Not lend your sister twenty Napoleons!"

"No, Sophie. I never lend money. It is a rule."

"Will you give me five? I am so poor. I have almost nothing."

"Things are not so bad with you as that, I hope."

"Ah! yes, they are very bad. Since I have been in this accursed city — now, this time, what have I got? Nothing — nothing. She was to be all in all to me, and she has given me nothing! It is very bad to be so poor. Say that you will give me five Napoleons — oh my brother." She was still hanging by his arm, and, as she did so, she looked up into his face with tears in her eyes. As he regarded her, bending down his face over hers, a slight smile came upon his countenance. Then he put his hand into his pocket, and, taking out his purse, handed to her five sovereigns.

"Only five," she said.

"Only five," he answered.

"A thousand thanks, oh my brother."

Then she kissed him again, and after that he went. She accompanied him to the top of the stairs, and from thence showered blessings on his head, till she heard the lock of the door closed behind him. When he was altogether gone she unlocked an inner drawer in her desk, and, taking out an uncompleted rouleau of gold, added her brother's sovereigns thereto. The sum he had given her was exactly wanted to make up the required number of twenty-five. She counted them half a dozen times to be quite sure, and then rolled them carefully in paper, and sealed the little packet at each end. "Ah!" she said, speaking to herself, "they are very nice. Nothing else English is nice, but only these." There were many rolls of money before her in the drawer of the desk — some ten, perhaps, or twelve. These she took out one after another, passing them lovingly through her fingers, looking at the little seals at the

ends of each, weighing them in her hand as though to make sure that no wrong had been done to them in her absence, standing them up one against another to see that they were of the same length. We may be quite sure that Sophie Gordeloup brought no sovereigns with her to England when she came over with Lady Ongar after the earl's death, and that the hoard before her contained simply the plunder which she had collected during this her latest visit to the "accursed" country which she was going to leave.

But before she started she was resolved to make one more attempt upon that mine of wealth which, but a few weeks ago, had seemed to lie open before her. She had learned from the servants in Bolton Street that Lady Ongar was with Lady Clavering, at Clavering Park, and she addressed a letter to her there. This letter she wrote in English, and she threw into her appeal all the pathos of which she was capable.

"Mount Street, October, 186—.

"DEAREST JULIE, — I do not think you would wish me to go away from this country forever — forever, without one word of farewell to her I love so fondly. Yes, I have loved you with all my heart, and now I am going away — forever. Shall we not meet each other once, and have one embrace? No trouble will be too much to me for that. No journey will be too long. Only say, Sophie, come to your Julie."

"I must go because I am so poor. Yes, I cannot live longer here without the means. I am not ashamed to say to my Julie, who is rich, that I am poor. No; nor would I be ashamed to wait on my Julie like a slave if she would let me. My Julie was angry with me because of my brother! Was it my fault that he came upon us in our little retreat, where we were so happy? Oh no. I told him not to come. I knew his coming was for nothing — nothing at all. I knew where was the heart of my Julie — my poor Julie! But he was not worth that heart, and the pearl was thrown before a pig. But my brother — Ah! he has ruined me. Why am I separated from my Julie but for him? Well, I can go away, and in my own countries there are those who will not wish to be separated from Sophie Gordeloup."

"May I now tell my Julie in what condition is her poor friend? She will remember how it was that my feet brought me to England — to England, to which I had said farewell forever — to England, where people must be rich like my Julie be-

fore they can eat and drink. I thought nothing then but of my Julie. I stopped not on the road to make merchandise — what you call a bargain — about my coming. No; I came at once, leaving all things — my little affairs — in confusion, because my Julie wanted me to come! It was in the winter. Oh, that winter! My poor bones shall never forget it. They are racked still with the pains which your savage winds have given them. And now it is autumn. Ten months have I been here, and I have eaten up my little substance. Oh, Julie, you, who are so rich, do not know what is the poverty of your Sophie!

"A lawyer have told me — not a French lawyer, but an English — that somebody should pay me everything. He says the law would give it me. He have offered me the money himself, just to let him make an action. But I have said no. No, Sophie will not have an action with her Julie. She would scorn that; and so the lawyer went away. But if my Julie will think of this, and will remember her Sophie — how much she have expended, and now at last there is nothing left. She must go and beg among her friends. And why? Because she have loved her Julie too well. You, who are so rich, would miss it not at all. What would two — three hundred pounds be to my Julie?"

"Shall I come to you? Say so; say so, and I will go at once, if I did crawl on my knees. Oh, what a joy to see my Julie! And do not think I will trouble you about money. No, your Sophie will be too proud for that. Not a word will I say but to love you. Nothing will I do but to print one kiss on my Julie's forehead, and then to retire forever, asking God's blessing for her dear head.

"Thine — always thine, SOPHIE."

Lady Ongar, when she received this letter, was a little perplexed by it, not feeling quite sure in what way she might best answer it. It was the special severity of her position that there was no one to whom, in such difficulties, she could apply for advice. Of one thing she was quite sure — that, willingly, she would never again see her devoted Sophie. And she knew that the woman deserved no money from her; that she had deserved none, but had received much. Every assertion in her letter was false. No one had wished her to come, and the expense of her coming had been paid for her over and over again. Lady Ongar knew that she had money, and knew also that she would have had immediate re-

course to law if any lawyer would have suggested to her, with a probability of success, that he could get more for her. No doubt she had been telling her story to some attorney, in the hope that money might thus be extracted, and had been dragging her Julie's name through the mud, telling all she knew of that wretched Florentine story. As to all that Lady Ongar had no doubt, and yet she wished to send the woman money!

There are services for which one is ready to give almost any amount of money payment, if only one can be sure that that money payment will be taken as sufficient recompense for the service in question. Sophie Gordeloup had been useful. She had been very disagreeable, but she had been useful. She had done things which nobody else could have done, and she had done her work well. That she had been paid for her work over and over again there was no doubt; but Lady Ongar was willing to give her yet farther payment, if only there might be an end of it. But she feared to do this, dreading the nature and cunning of the little woman — lest she should take such payment as an acknowledgment of services for which secret compensation must be made, and should then proceed to farther threats. Thinking much of all this, Julie at last wrote to her Sophie as follows:

"Lady Ongar presents her compliments to Madame Gordeloup, and must decline to see Madame Gordeloup again after what has passed. Lady Ongar is very sorry to hear that Madame Gordeloup is in want of funds. Whatever assistance Lady Ongar might have been willing to afford, she now feels that she is prohibited from giving any by the allusion which Madame Gordeloup has made to legal advice. If Madame Gordeloup has legal demands on Lady Ongar which are said by a lawyer to be valid, Lady Ongar would strongly recommend Madame Gordeloup to enforce them.

"Clavering Park, October, 186—."

This she wrote, acting altogether on her own judgment, and sent off by return of post. She almost wept at her own cruelty after the letter was gone, and greatly doubted her own discretion. But of whom could she have asked advice? Could she have told all the story of Madame Gordeloup to the rector or to the rector's wife? The letter, no doubt, was a discreet letter, but she greatly doubted her own discretion, and when she received her Sophie's rejoinder

der, she hardly dared to break the envelope.

Poor Sophie! Her Julie's letter nearly broke her heart. For sincerity little credit was due to her — but some little was perhaps due. That she should be called Madame Gordeloup, and have compliments presented to her by the woman — by the countess with whom and with whose husband she had been on such closely familiar terms, did in truth wound some tender feelings within her breast. Such love as she had been able to give, she had given to her Julie. That she had always been willing to rob her Julie — to make a milch-cow of her Julie — to sell her Julie — to threaten her Julie — to quarrel with her Julie, if aught might be done in that way — to expose her Julie — nay, to destroy her Julie, if money was to be so made — all this did not hinder her love. She loved her Julie, and was broken-hearted that her Julie should have written to her in such a strain.

But her feelings were much more acute when she came to perceive that she had damaged her own affairs by the hint of a menace which she had thrown out. Business is business, and must take precedence of all sentiment and romance in this hard world in which bread is so necessary. Of that Madame Gordeloup was well aware. And therefore, having given herself but two short minutes to weep over her Julie's hardness, she applied her mind at once to the rectification of the error she had made. Yes, she had been wrong about the lawyer — certainly wrong. But then these English people were so pig-headed! A slight suspicion of a hint, such as that she had made, would have been taken by a Frenchman, by a Russian, by a Pole, as meaning no more than it meant. "But these English are bulls; the men and the women are all like bulls — bulls!"

She at once sat down and wrote another letter — another in such an ecstasy of eagerness to remove the evil impressions which she had made, that she wrote it almost with the natural effusions of her heart.

"DEAR FRIEND, — Your coldness kills me — kills me! But perhaps I have deserved it. If I said there were legal demands I did deserve it. No, there are none. Legal demands! Oh no. What can your poor friend demand legally? The lawyer — he knows nothing; he was a stranger. It was my brother spoke to him. What should I do with a lawyer? Oh, my friend, do not be angry with your poor servant. I write now not to ask for money, but for a kind

word — for one word of kindness and love to your Sophie before she have gone forever — yes, forever. Oh, Julie — oh, my angel, I would lie at your feet and kiss them if you were here.

"Yours till death, even though you should still be hard to me,
SOPHIE."

To this appeal Lady Ongar sent no direct answer, but she commissioned Mr. Turnbull, her lawyer, to call upon Madame Gordeloup and pay to that lady one hundred pounds, taking her receipt for the same. Lady Ongar, in her letter to the lawyer, explained that the woman in question had been useful in Florence, and explained also that she might pretend that she had farther claims. "If so," said Lady Ongar, "I wish you to tell her that she can prosecute them at law if she pleases. The money I now give her is a gratuity made for certain services rendered in Florence during the illness of Lord Ongar." This commission Mr. Turnbull executed, and Sophie Gordeloup, when taking the money, made no demand for any farther payment.

Four days after this a little woman, carrying a very big bandbox in her hands, might have been seen to scramble with difficulty out of a boat in the Thames up the side of a steamer bound from thence for Boulogne; and after her there climbed up an active little man, who, with peremptory voice, repulsed the boatman's demand for farther payment. He also had a bandbox on his arm, belonging, no doubt, to the little woman. And it might have been seen that the active little man, making his way to the table at which the clerk of the boat was sitting, out of his own purse paid the passage-money for two passengers through to Paris. And the head, and legs, and neck of that little man were like to the head, and legs, and neck of — our friend Doodles, alias Captain Boodle, of Warwickshire.

CHAPTER XLVII.

SHOWING HOW THINGS SETTLED THEMSELVES AT THE RECTORY.

WHEN Harry's letter, with the tidings of the fate of his cousins, reached Florence at Stratton, the whole family was, not unnaturally, thrown into great excitement. Being slow people, the elder Burtons had hardly as yet realized the fact that Harry was again to be accepted among the Burton Penates as a pure divinity. Mrs. Burton, for some weeks past, had grown to be

almost sublime in her wrath against him. That a man should live and treat her daughter as Florence was about to be treated! Had not her husband forbidden such a journey, as being useless in regard to the expenditure, she would have gone up to London that she might have told Harry what she thought of him. Then came the news that Harry was again a divinity—an Apollo, whom the Burton Penates ought only to be too proud to welcome to a seat among them!

And now came this other news that this Apollo was to be an Apollo indeed! When the god first became a god again, there was still a cloud upon the minds of the elder Burtons as to the means by which the divinity was to be sustained. A god in truth, but a god with so very moderate an annual income—unless, indeed, those old Burtons made it up to an extent which seemed to them to be quite unnatural! There was joy among the Burtons, of course, but the joy was somewhat dimmed by these reflections as to the slight means of their Apollo. A lover who was not an Apollo might wait; but, as they had learned already, there was danger in keeping such a god as this suspended on the tenter-hooks of expectation.

But now there came the farther news! This Apollo of theirs had really a place of his own among the gods of Olympus. He was the eldest son of a man of large fortune, and would be a baronet! He had already declared that he would marry at once—that his father wished him to do so, and that an abundant income would be forthcoming. As to his eagerness for an immediate marriage, no divinity in or out of the heavens could behave better. Old Mrs. Burton, as she went through the process of taking him again to her heart, remembered that that virtue had been his even before the days of his backsliding had come—a warm-hearted, eager, affectionate divinity, with only this against him, that he wanted some careful looking after in these, his unsettled days. “I really do think that he’ll be as fond of his own fire-side as any other man, when he has once settled down,” said Mrs. Burton.

It will not, I hope, be taken as a blot on the character of this mother that she was much elated at the prospect of the good things which were to fall to her daughter’s lot. For herself she desired nothing. For her daughters she had coveted only good, substantial, painstaking husbands, who would fear God and mind their business. When Harry Clavering had come across her path and had demanded a daughter from her, after the manner of the other

young men who had learned the secrets of their profession at Stratton, she had desired nothing more than that he and Florence should walk in the path which had been followed by her sisters and their husbands. But then had come that terrible fear, and now had come these golden prospects. That her daughter should be Lady Clavering, of Clavering Park! She could not but be elated at the thought of it. She would not live to see it, but the consciousness that it would be so was pleasant to her in her old age. Florence had ever been regarded as the flower of the flock, and now she would be taken up into high places, according to her deserts.

First had come the letter from Harry, and then, after an interval of a week, another letter from Mrs. Clavering, pressing her dear Florence to go to the parsonage. “We think that at present we all ought to be together,” said Mrs. Clavering, “and therefore we want you to be with us.” It was very flattering. “I suppose I ought to go, mamma,” said Florence. Mrs. Burton was of opinion that she certainly ought to go. “You should write to her ladyship at once,” said Mrs. Burton, mindful of the change which had taken place. Florence, however, addressed her letter, as heretofore, to Mrs. Clavering, thinking that a mistake on that side would be better than a mistake on the other. It was not for her to be over-mindful of the rank with which she was about to be connected. “You won’t forget your old mother now that you are going to be so grand?” said Mrs. Burton, as Florence was leaving her.

“You only say that to laugh at me,” said Florence. “I expect no grandness, and I am sure you expect no forgetfulness.”

The solemnity consequent upon the first news of the accident had worn itself off, and Florence found the family at the parsonage happy and comfortable. Mrs. Fielding was still there, and Mr. Fielding was expected again after the next Sunday. Fanny also was there, and Florence could see during the first half hour that she was very radiant. Mr. Saul, however was not there, and it may as well be said at once that Mr. Saul as yet knew nothing of his coming fortune. Florence was received with open arms by them all, and by Harry with arms which were almost too open. “I suppose it may be in about three weeks from now,” he said at the first moment in which he could have her to himself.

“Oh Harry—no,” said Florence.

“No—why no? That’s what my mother proposes.”

"In three weeks! She could not have said that. Nobody has begun to think of such a thing yet at Stratton."

"They are so very slow at Stratton!"

"And you are so very fast at Clavering! But, Harry, we don't know where we are going to live."

"We should go abroad at first I suppose."

"And what then? That would only be for a month or so."

"Only for a month? I mean for all the winter—and the spring. Why not? One can see nothing in a month. If we are back for the shooting next year, that would do; and then, of course, we should come here. I should say next winter—that is, the winter after the next; we might as well stay with them at the big house, and then we could look about us, you know. I should like a place near to this, because of the hunting."

Florence, when she heard all this, became aware that in talking about a month she had forgotten herself. She had been accustomed to holidays of a month's duration, and to honey-moon trips fitted to such vacations. A month was the longest holiday ever heard of in the chambers in the Adelphi, or at the house in Onslow Crescent. She had forgotten herself. It was not to be the lot of her husband to earn his bread, and fit himself to such periods as business might require. Then Harry went on describing the tour which he had arranged—which, as he said, he only suggested. But it was quite apparent that in this matter he intended to be paramount. Florence indeed made no objection. To spend a fortnight in Paris—to hurry over the Alps before the cold weather came—to spend a month in Florence, and then go on to Rome—it would all be very nice. But she declared that it would suit the next year better than this.

"Suit ten thousand fiddlesticks," said Harry.

"But it is October now."

"And therefore there is no time to lose."

"I haven't a dress in the world, but the one I have on, and a few others like it. Oh, Harry, how can you talk in that way?"

"Well, say four weeks then from now. That will make it the seventh of November, and we'll only stay a day or two in Paris. We can do Paris next year—in May. If you'll agree to that, I'll agree."

But Florence's breath was taken away from her, and she could agree to nothing. She did agree to nothing till she had been talked into doing so by Mrs. Clavering.

"My dear," said her future mother-in-

law, "what you say is undoubtedly true. There is no absolute necessity for hurrying. It is not an affair of life and death. But you and Harry have been engaged quite long enough now, and I really don't see why you should put it off. If you do as he asks you, you will just have time to make yourselves comfortable before the cold weather begins."

"But mamma will be so surprised."

"I'm sure she will wish it, my dear. You see Harry is a young man of that sort—so impetuous I mean, you know, and so eager—and so—you know what I mean—that the sooner he is married the better. You can't but take it as a compliment Florence, that he is so eager."

"Of course I do."

"And you should reward him. Believe me, it will be best that it should not be delayed." Whether or no Mrs. Clavering had present in her imagination the possibility of any farther danger that might result from Lady Ongar, I will not say, but if so she altogether failed in communicating her idea to Florence.

"Then I must go home at once," said Florence, driven almost to bewail the terrors of her position.

"You can write home at once and tell your mother. You can tell her all that I say, and I am sure she will agree with me. If you wish it, I will write a line to Mrs. Burton myself." Florence said that she would wish it. "And we can begin, you know, to get your things ready here. People don't take so long about all that nowadays as they used to do." When Mrs. Clavering had turned against her, Florence knew that she had no hope, and surrendered subject to the approval of the higher authorities at Stratton. The higher authorities at Stratton approved also, of course, and Florence found herself fixed to a day with a suddenness that bewildered her. Immediately—almost as soon as the consent had been extorted from her—she began to be surrounded with incipient preparation for the event, as to which, about three weeks since, she had made up her mind that it would never come to pass.

On the second day of her arrival, in the privacy of her bedroom, Fanny communicated to her the decision of her family in regard to Mr. Saul. But she told the story at first as though this decision referred to the living only—as though the rectory were to be conferred on Mr. Saul without any burden attached to it. "He has been here so long, dear," said Fanny, "and understands the people so well."

"I am so delighted," said Florence.

"I am sure it is the best thing papa could do — that is, if he quite makes up his mind to give up the parish himself."

This troubled Florence, who did not know that a baronet could hold a living."

"I thought he must give up being a clergyman now that Sir Hugh is dead?"

"Oh dear, no." And then Fanny who was great on ecclesiastical subjects, explained it all. "Even though he were to be a peer, he could hold a living if he pleased. A great many baronets are clergymen, and some of them do hold preferments. As to papa, the doubt has been with him whether he would wish to give up the work. But he will preach sometimes, you know, though of course he will not be able to do that unless Mr. Saul lets him. No one but the rector has a right to his own pulpit except the bishop, and he can preach three times a year if he likes it."

"And suppose the bishop wanted to preach four times?"

"He couldn't do it — at least I believe not. But, you see, he never wants to preach at all — not in such a place as this — so that does not signify."

"And will Mr. Saul come and live here in this house?"

"Some day I suppose he will," said Fanny, blushing.

"And you, dear?"

"I don't know how that may be."

"Come, Fanny."

"Indeed I don't, Florence, or I would tell you. Of course Mr. Saul has asked me. I never had any secret with you about that — have I?"

"No; you were very good."

"Then he asked me again — twice again. And then there came — oh, such a quarrel between him and papa. It was so terrible. Do you know, I believe they wouldn't speak in the vestry! Not but what each of them has the highest possible opinion of the other. But of course Mr. Saul couldn't marry on a curacy. When I think of it, it really seems that he must have been mad."

"But you don't think him so mad now, dear."

"He doesn't know a word about it yet — not a word. He hasn't been in the house since, and papa and he didn't speak — not in a friendly way — till the news came of poor Hugh's being drowned. Then he came up to papa, and, of course, papa took his hand. But he still thinks he is going away."

"And when is he to be told that he needn't go?"

"That is the difficulty. Mamma will

have to do it, I believe. But what she will say I'm sure I, for one, can't think."

"Mrs. Clavering will have no difficulty."

"You mustn't call her Mrs. Clavering."

"Lady Clavering, then."

"That's a great deal worse. She's your mamma now — not quite so much as she is mine, but the next thing to it."

"She'll know what to say to Mr. Saul."

"But what is she to say?"

"Well, Fanny, you ought to know that. I suppose you do — love him?"

"I have never told him so."

"But you will?"

"It seems so odd. Mamma will have to — Suppose he were to turn round and say he didn't want me."

"That would be awkward."

"He would in a minute, if that was what he felt. The idea of having the living would not weigh with him a bit."

"But when he was so much in love before, it won't make him out of love — will it?"

"I don't know," said Fanny, "At any rate, mamma is to see him to-morrow, and after that I suppose — I'm sure I don't know — but I suppose he'll come to the rectory as he used to do."

"How happy you must be," said Florence kissing her. To this Fanny made some unintelligible demur. It was undoubtedly possible that, under the altered circumstances of the case, so strange a being as Mr. Saul might have changed his mind.

There was a great trial awaiting Florence Burton. She had to be taken up to call on the ladies at the great house — on the two widowed ladies who were still remaining there when she came to Clavering. It was only on the day before her arrival that Harry had seen Lady Ongar. He had thought much of the matter before he went across to the house, doubting whether it would not be better to let Julia go without troubling her with a farther interview. But he had not then seen even Lady Clavering since the tidings of her bereavement had come, and he felt that it would not be well that he should let his cousin's widow leave Clavering without offering her his sympathy. And it might be better, also, that he should see Julia once again, if only that he might show himself capable of meeting her without the exhibition of any peculiar emotion. He went, therefore, to the house, and having inquired for Lady Clavering, saw both the sisters together. He soon found that the presence of the younger one was a relief to him. Lady Clavering was so sad, and so peevish in her sadness — so broken-

spirited, so far as yet from recognizing the great enfranchisement that had come to her, that with her alone he would have found himself almost unable to express the sympathy which he felt. But with Lady Ongar he had no difficulty. Lady Ongar, her sister being with them in the room, talked to him easily, as though there had never been anything between them two to make conversation difficult. That all words between them should, on such an occasion as this, be sad, was a matter of course; but it seemed to Harry that Julia had freed herself from all the effects of that feeling which had existed between them, and that it would become him to do this as effectually as she had done it. Such an idea, at least, was in his mind for a moment: but when he left her she spoke one word which dispelled it. "Harry," she said, "you must ask Miss Burton to come across and see me. I hear that she is to be at the rectory to-morrow." Harry of course said that he would send her. "She will understand why I cannot go to her, as I should do—but for poor Hermy's position. You will explain this, Harry." Harry, blushing up to his forehead, declared that Florence would require no explanation, and that she would certainly make the visit as proposed. "I wish to see her, Harry—so much. And if I do not see her now, I may never have another chance."

It was nearly a week after this that Florence went across to the great house with Mrs. Clavering and Fanny. I think that she understood the nature of the visit she was called upon to make, and no doubt she trembled much at the coming ordeal. She was going to see her great rival—her rival, who had almost been preferred to her—nay, who had been preferred to her for some short space of time, and whose claims as to beauty and wealth were so greatly superior to her own. And this woman whom she was to see had been the first love of the man whom she now regarded as her own, and would have been about to be his wife at this moment had it not been for her own treachery to him. Was she so beautiful as people said? Florence, in the bottom of her heart, wished that she might have been saved from this interview.

The three ladies from the rectory found the two ladies at the great house sitting together in the small drawing-room. Florence was so confused that she could hardly bring herself to speak to Lady Clavering, or so much as look at Lady Ongar. She shook hands with the elder sister, and knew that her hand was then taken by the other.

Julia at first spoke a very few words to Mrs. Clavering, and Fanny sat herself down beside Hermione. Florence took a chair at a little distance, and was left there for a few minutes without notice. For this she was very thankful, and by degrees was able to fix her eyes on the face of the woman whom she so feared to see, and yet on whom she so desired to look. Lady Clavering was a mass of ill-arranged widow's weeds. She had assumed in all its grotesque ugliness those paraphernalia of outward woe which women have been condemned to wear, in order that for a time they may be shorn of all the charms of their sex. Nothing could be more proper or unbecoming than the heavy, drooping, shapeless blackness in which Lady Clavering had enveloped herself. But Lady Ongar, though also a widow, though as yet a widow of not twelve months' standing, was dressed—in weeds, no doubt, but in weeds which had been so cultivated that they were as good as flowers. She was very beautiful. Florence owned to herself as she sat there in silence, that Lady Ongar was the most beautiful woman she had ever seen. But hers was not the beauty by which, as she would have thought, Harry Clavering would have been attracted. Lady Ongar's form, bust, and face were, at this period of her life, almost majestic, whereas the softness and grace of womanhood were the charms which Harry loved. He had sometimes said to Florence that, to his taste, Cecilia Burton was almost perfect as a woman; and there could be no contrast greater than that between Cecilia Burton and Lady Ongar. But Florence did not remember that the Julia Brabazon of three years' since had not been the same as the Lady Ongar whom now she saw.

When they had been there some minutes, Lady Ongar came and sat beside Florence, moving her seat as though she were doing the most natural thing in the world. Florence's heart came to her mouth, but she made a resolution that she would, if possible bear herself well. "You have been at Clavering before, I think," said Lady Ongar. Florence said that she had been at the parsonage during the last Easter. "Yes, I heard that you dined here with my brother-in-law." This she said in a low voice, having seen that Lady Clavering was engaged with Fanny and Mrs. Clavering. "Was it not terribly sudden?"

"Terribly sudden," said Florence.

"The two brothers! Had you not met Captain Clavering?"

"Yes; he was here when I dined with your sister."

"Poor fellow! Is it not odd that they should have gone, and that their friend, whose yacht it was, should have been saved? They say, however, that Mr Stuart behaved admirably, begging his friends to get into the boat first. He staid by the vessel when the boat was carried away, and he was saved in that way. But he meant to do the best he could for them. There's no doubt of that."

"But how dreadful his feelings must be!"

"Men do not think so much of these things as we do. They have so much more to employ their minds. Don't you think so?" Florence did not at the moment quite know what she thought about men's feelings, but said that she supposed that such was the case. "But I think that, after all, they are juster than we are," continued Lady Ongar — "juster and truer, though not so tender-hearted. Mr. Stuart, no doubt, would have been willing to drown himself to save his friends, because the fault was in some degree his. I don't know that I should have been able to do so much."

"In such a moment, it must have been so difficult to think of what ought to be done."

"Yes, indeed; and there is but little good in speculating upon it now. You know this place, do you not — the house I mean, and the gardens?"

"Not very well." Florence, as she answered this question, began again to tremble. "Take a turn with me, and I will show you the garden. My hat and cloak are in the hall." Then Florence got up to accompany her trembling very much inwardly.

"Miss Burton and I are going out for a few minutes," said Lady Ongar, addressing herself to Mrs. Clavering. "We will not keep you waiting very long."

"We are in no hurry," said Mrs. Clavering. Then Florence was carried off, and found herself alone with her conquered rival.

"Not that there is much to show you," said Lady Ongar — "indeed nothing; but the place must be of more interest to you than to any one else, and if you are fond of that sort of thing, no doubt you will make it all that is charming."

"I am very fond of a garden," said Florence.

"I don't know whether I am. Alone, by myself, I think I should care nothing for the prettiest Eden in all England. I don't think I would care for a walk through the Elysian Fields by myself. I am a chameleon, and take the color of those with whom I live. My future colors will not be very bright, as I take it. It's a gloomy place enough, is it

not? But there are fine trees, you see, which are the only things which one cannot by any possibility command. Given good trees, taste and money may do anything very quickly, as I have no doubt you'll find."

"I don't suppose I shall have much to do with it — at present."

"I should think that you will have every thing to do with it. There, Miss Burton, I brought you here to show you this very spot, and make to you my confession here, and to get from you, here, one word of confidence, if you will give it me." Florence was trembling now outwardly as well as inwardly. "You know my story — as far, I mean, as I had a story once, in conjunction with Harry Clavering?"

"I think I do," said Florence.

"I am sure you do," said Lady Ongar. "He has told me that you do, and what he says is always true. It was here, on this spot that I gave him back his troth to me, and told him that I would have none of his love, because he was poor. That is barely two years ago. Now he is poor no longer. Now, had I been true to him, marriage with him would have been, in a prudential point of view, all that any woman could desire. I gave up the dearest heart, the sweetest temper, ay, and the truest man that, that — Well, you have won him instead, and he has been the gainer. I doubt whether I ever should have made him happy, but I know that you will do so. It was just here that I parted from him."

"He has told me of that parting," said Florence.

"I am sure he has. And, Miss Burton, if you will allow me to say one word farther — do not be made to think any ill of him because of what happened the other day."

"I think no ill of him," said Florence, proudly.

"That is well. But I am sure you do not. You are not one to think evil, as I take it, of anybody, much less of him whom you love. When he saw me again, free as I am, and when I saw him, thinking him also to be free, was it strange that some memory of old days should come back upon us? But the fault, if fault there has been, was mine."

"I have never said that there was any fault."

"No, Miss Burton, but others have said so. No doubt I am foolish to talk to you in this way, and I have not yet said that which I desired to say. It is simply this — that I do not begrudge you your happiness. I wished the same happiness to be mine, but it is not mine. It might have been, but I forfeited it. It is past, and I will pray that

you may enjoy it long. You will not refuse to receive my congratulations?"

"Indeed I will not."

"Or to think of me as a friend of your husband's?"

"Oh no."

"That is all, then. I have shown you the gardens, and now we may go in. Some day, perhaps, when you are Lady Paramount here, and your children are running about the place, I may come again to see them—if you and he will have me."

"I hope you will Lady Ongar. In truth I hope so."

"It is odd enough that I said to him once that I would never go to Clavering Park again till I went there to see his wife. That was long before those two poor brothers perished—before I had ever heard of Florence Burton. And yet, indeed, it was not very long ago. It was since my husband died. But that was not quite true, for here I am, and he has not yet got a wife. But it was odd, was it not?"

"I cannot think what should have made you say that."

"A spirit of prophecy comes on one sometimes, I suppose. Well, shall we go in? I have shown you all the wonders of the garden, and told you all the wonders connected with it of which I know aught. No doubt there would be other wonders more wonderful, if one could ransack the private history of all the Claverings for the last hundred years. I hope, Miss Burton, that any marvels which may attend your career here may be happy marvels." She then took Florence by the hand, and, drawing close to her, stooped over and kissed her. You will think me a fool, of course," said she, "but I do not care for that." Florence now was in tears, and could make no answer in words; but she pressed the hand which she still held, and then followed her companion back into the house. After that the visit was soon brought to an end, and the three ladies from the rectory returned across the park to their house.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

CONCLUSION.

FLORENCE BURTON had taken upon herself to say that Mrs. Clavering would have no difficulty in making to Mr. Saul the communication which was now needed before he could be received at the rectory, as the rector's successor and future son-in-law; but Mrs. Clavering was by no means so confident of her own powers. To her it seemed

as though the undertaking which she had in hand, was one surrounded with difficulties. Her husband, when the matter was being discussed, at once made her understand that he would not relieve her by an offer to perform the task. He had been made to break the bad news to Lady Clavering, and, having been submissive in that matter, felt himself able to stand aloof altogether as to this more difficult embassy. "I suppose it would hardly do to ask Harry to see him again," Mrs. Clavering had said. "You would do it much better, my dear," the rector had replied. Then Mrs. Clavering had submitted in her turn; and when the scheme was fully matured, and the time had come to which the making of the proposition could no longer be delayed with prudence Mr. Saul was summoned by a short note. "DEAR MR. SAUL,—If you are disengaged, would you come to me at the rectory at eleven to-morrow? Yours ever, M. C." Mr Saul of course said that he would come. When the to-morrow had arrived and breakfast was over, the rector and Harry took themselves off somewhere about the grounds of the great house, counting up their treasures of proprietorship, as we can fancy that men so circumstanced would do, while Mary Fielding, with Fanny and Florence, retired up stairs, so that they might be well out of the way. They knew, all of them, what was about to be done, and Fanny behaved herself like a white lamb, decked with bright ribbons for the sacrificial altar. To her it was a sacrificial morning—very sacred, very solemn, and very trying to the nerves.

"I don't think that any girl was ever in such a position before," she said to her sister.

"A great many girls would be glad to be in the same position," Mrs. Fielding replied.

"Do you think so? To me there is something almost humiliating in the idea that he should be asked to take me."

"Fiddlestick, my dear," replied Mrs. Fielding.

Mr. Saul came, punctual as the church clock, of which he had the regulating himself, and was shown into the rectory dining-room, where Mrs. Clavering was sitting alone. He looked, as he ever did, serious, composed, ill dressed, and like a gentleman. Of course he must have supposed that the present rector would make some change in his mode of living, and could not be surprised that he should have been summoned to the rectory; but he was surprised that the summons should have come from Mrs. Clavering, and not from the rector himself. It appeared to him that the old enmity must

be very enduring if, even now, Mr. Clavering could not bring himself to see his curate on a matter of business.

"It seems a long time since we have seen you here, Mr. Saul," said Mrs. Clavering.

"Yes; when I have remembered how often I used to be here, my absence has seemed long and strange."

"It has been a source of great grief to me."

"And to me," Mrs. Clavering.

"But, as circumstances then were, in truth it could not be avoided. Common prudence made it necessary. Don't you think so, Mr. Saul?"

"If you ask me I must answer according to my own ideas. Common prudence should not have made it necessary—at least not according to my view of things. Common prudence, with different people, means such different things! But I am not going to quarrel with your ideas of common prudence, Mrs. Clavering."

Mrs. Clavering had begun badly, and was aware of it. She should have said nothing about the past. She had foreseen, from the first, the danger of doing so, but had been unable to rush at once into the golden future. "I hope we shall have no more quarrelling, at any rate," she said.

"There shall be none on my part. Only, Mrs. Clavering, you must not suppose, from my saying so, that I intend to give up my pretensions. A word from your daughter would make me do so, but no words from any one else."

"She ought to be very proud of such constancy on your part, Mr. Saul, and I have no doubt she will be." Mr. Saul did not understand this, and made no reply to it. "I don't know whether you have heard that Mr. Clavering intends to—give up the living?"

"I have thought it probable that he would do so."

"He has made up his mind that he will. The fact is, that if he held it, he must neglect either that or the property." We will not stop at this moment to examine what Mr. Saul's ideas must have been as to the exigencies of the property, which would leave no time for the performance of such clerical duties as had fallen for some years past to the share of the rector himself. "He hopes that he may be allowed to take some part in the services, but he means to resign the living."

"I suppose that will not much affect me for the little time that I have to remain."

"We think it will affect you, and hope

that it may. Mr. Clavering wishes you to accept the living."

"To accept the living? And for a moment even Mr. Saul looked as though he were surprised.

"Yes, Mr. Saul."

"To be rector of Clavering?"

"If you see no objection to such an arrangement."

"It is a most munificent offer, but as strange as it is munificent. Unless, indeed"—And then some glimpse of the truth made its way into the chinks of Mr. Saul's mind.

"Mr. Clavering would, no doubt, have made the offer to you himself had it not been that I can, perhaps, speak to you about dear Fanny better than he could. Though our prudence has not been quite to your mind, you can, at any rate, understand that we might very much object to her marrying you when there was nothing for you to live on, even though we had no objection to yourself personally."

"But Mr. Clavering did object on both grounds."

"I was not aware that he had done so; but, if so, no such objection is now made by him—or by me. My idea is that a child should be allowed to consult her own heart, and to indulge her own choice, provided that in doing so she does not prepare for herself a life of indigence, which must be a life of misery; and of course providing also that there be no strong personal objection."

"A life of indigence need not be a life of misery," said Mr. Saul, with that obstinacy which formed so great a part of his character.

"Well, well."

"I am very indigent, but I am not at all miserable. If we are to be made miserable by that, what is the use of all our teaching?"

"But, at any rate, a competence is comfortable."

"Too comfortable!" As Mr. Saul made this exclamation, Mrs. Clavering could not but wonder at her daughter's taste. But the matter had gone too far now for any possibility of receding.

"You will not refuse it, I hope, as it will be accompanied by what you say you still desire."

"No, I will not refuse it. And may God give her and me grace so to use the riches of this world that they become not a stumbling-block to us, and a rock of offense. It is possible that the camel should be made to go through the needle's eye. It is possible."

"The position, you know, is not one of great wealth."

"It is to me who have barely hitherto had the means of support. Will you tell your husband from me that I will accept, and endeavor not to betray the double trust he proposes to confer on me? It is much that he should give to me his daughter. She shall be to me bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh. If God will give me his grace thereto, I will watch over her, so that no harm shall come nigh her. I love her as the apple of my eye; and I am thankful—very thankful that the rich gift should be made to me."

"I am sure that you love her, Mr. Saul."

"But," continued he, not marking her interruption, "that other trust is one still greater, and requiring a more tender care and even a closer sympathy. I shall feel that the souls of these people will be, as it were, in my hand, and that I shall be called upon to give an account of their welfare. I will strive—I will strive. And she, also, will be with me to help me."

When Mrs. Clavering described this scene to her husband, he shook his head, and there came over his face a smile, in which there was much of melancholy, as he said, "Ah! yes, that is all very well now. He will settle down as other men do, I suppose, when he has four or five children around him." Such were the ideas which the experience of the outgoing and elder clergyman taught him to entertain as to the ecstasie piety of his younger brother.

It was Mrs. Clavering who suggested to Mr. Saul that perhaps he would like to see Fanny. This she did when her story had been told, and he was preparing to leave her. "Certainly, if she will come to me."

"I will make no promise," said Mrs. Clavering, "but I will see." Then she went up stairs to the room where the girls were sitting, and the sacrificial lamb was sent down into the drawingroom. "I suppose, if you say so, mamma"—

"I think, my dear, that you had better see him. You will meet then more comfortably afterward." So Fanny went into the drawingroom, and Mr. Saul was sent to her there. What passed between them all readers of these pages will understand. Few young ladies, I fear, will envy Fanny Clavering her lover; but they will remember that Love will still be lord of all, and they will acknowledge that he had done much to deserve the success in life which had come in his way.

It was long before the old rector could reconcile himself either to the new rector or

his new son-in-law. Mrs. Clavering had now so warmly taken up Fanny's part, and had so completely assumed a mother's interest in her coming marriage, that Mr. Clavering, or Sir Henry, as we may now call him, had found himself obliged to abstain from repeating to her the wonder with which he still regarded his daughter's choice. But to Harry he could still be eloquent on the subject. "Of course it's all right now," he said. "He's a very good young man, and nobody would work harder in the parish. I always thought I was very lucky to have such an assistant; but, upon my word, I cannot understand Fanny—I cannot, indeed."

"She has been taken by the religious side of her character," said Harry.

"Yes, of course. And no doubt it is very gratifying to me to see that she thinks so much of religion. It should be the first consideration with all of us at all times. But she has never been used to men like Mr. Saul."

"Nobody can deny that he is a gentleman."

"Yes, he is a gentleman; God forbid that I should say he was not, especially now that he is going to marry your sister. But—I don't know whether you quite understand what I mean."

"I think I do. He isn't quite one of our sort."

"How on earth she can ever have brought herself to look at him in that light!"

"There's no accounting for tastes, sir. And, after all, as he's to have the living, there will be nothing to regret."

"No, nothing to regret. I suppose he'll be up at the other house occasionally? I never could make any thing of him when he dined at the rectory; perhaps he'll be better there. Perhaps, when he's married, he'll get into the way of drinking a glass of wine like any body else. Dear Fanny, I hope she'll be happy. That's every thing." In answer to this, Harry took upon himself to assure his father that Fanny would be happy; and then they changed the conversation, and discussed the alterations which they would make in reference to the preservation of pheasants.

Mr. Saul and Fanny remained long together on that occasion, and when they parted he went off about his work, not saying a word to any other person in the house, and she betook herself as fast as her feet could carry her to her own room. She said not a word either to her mother, or to her sister, or to Florence as to what

had passed at that interview; but, when she was first seen by any of them, she was very grave in her demeanor, and very silent. When her father congratulated her, which he did with as much cordiality as he was able to assume, she kissed him, and thanked him for his care and kindness; but even this she did almost solemnly. "Ah! I see how it is to be," said the old rector to his wife. "There are to be no more cakes and ale in the parish." Then his wife reminded him of what he himself had said of the change which would take place in Mr. Saul's ways when he should have a lot of children running about his feet. "Then I can only hope that they'll begin to run about very soon," said the old rector.

To her sister, Mary Fielding, Fanny said little or nothing of her coming marriage, but to Florence, who, as regarded that event, was in the same position as herself, she frequently did express her feelings, declaring how awful to her was the responsibility of the thing she was about to do. "Of course that's quite true," said Florence, "but it doesn't make one doubt that one is right to marry."

"I don't know," said Fanny. "When I think of it, it does almost make me doubt."

"Then, if I were Mr. Saul, I would not let you think of it at all."

"Ah! that shows that you do not understand him. He would be the first to advise me to hesitate if he thought that—that—that—I don't know that I can quite express what I mean."

"Under those circumstances Mr. Saul won't think that—that—that—that"—

"Oh, Florence, it is too serious for laughing—it is indeed." Then Florence also hoped that a time might come, and that shortly, in which Mr. Saul might moderate his views, though she did not express herself exactly as the rector had done.

Immediately after this Florence went back to Stratton, in order that she might pass what remained to her of her freedom with her mother and father, and that she might prepare herself for her wedding. The affair with her was so much hurried that she had hardly time to give her mind to those considerations which were weighing so heavily on Fanny's mind. It was felt by all the Burtons, especially by Cecilia, that there was need for extension of their views in regard to millinery, seeing that Florence was to marry the eldest son and heir of a baronet. And old Mrs. Burton was awed almost into acquiescence by the reflections which came upon her when she

thought of the breakfast, and of the presence of Sir Henry Clavering. She at once summoned her daughter-in-law from Rums-gate to her assistance, and felt that all her experience, gathered from the wedding breakfasts of so many elder daughters, would hardly carry her through the difficulties of the present occasion.

The two widowed sisters were still at the great house when Sir Henry Clavering, with Harry and Fanny, went to Stratton, but they left it on the following day. The father and son went up together to bid them farewell, on the eve of their departure, and to press upon them, over and over again, the fact that they were still to regard the Claverings of Clavering Park as their nearest relations and friends. The eldest sister simply cried when this was said to her—cried easily with plentiful tears, till the weeds which enveloped her seemed to be damp from the ever-running fountain. Hitherto to weep had been her only refuge; but I think that even this had already become preferable to her former life. Lady Ongar assured Sir Henry, or Mr. Clavering, as he was still called till after their departure, that she would always remember and accept his kindness. "And you will come to us?" said he. "Certainly; when I can make Hermie come. She will be better when the summer is here. And then, after that, we will think about it." On this occasion she seemed to be quite cheerful herself, and bade Harry farewell with all the frank affection of an old friend.

"I have given up the house in Bolton Street," she said to him.

"And where do you mean to live?"

"Anywhere; just as it may suit Hermie. What difference does it make? We are going to Tenby now, and though Tenby seems to me to have as few attractions as any place I ever knew, I dare say we shall stay there, simply because we shall be there. That is the consideration which weighs most with such old women as we are. Good-by, Harry."

"Good-by, Julia. I hope that I may yet see you—you and Hermie, happy before long."

"I don't know much about happiness, Harry. There comes a dream of it sometimes—such as you have got now. But I will answer for this—you shall never hear of my being downhearted—at least not on my own account," she added, in a whisper. "Poor Hermie may sometimes drag me down; but I will do my best. And, Harry, tell your wife that I shall write to her occa-

sionally — once a year, or something like that, so that she need not be afraid. Good-by, Harry."

"Good-by, Julia." And so they parted.

Immediately on her arrival at Tenby, Lady Ongar communicated to Mr. Turnbull her intention of giving back to the Courton family not only the place called Ongar Park, but also the whole of her income with the exception of eight hundred a year, so that in that respect she might be equal to her sister. This brought Mr. Turnbull down to Tenby, and there was interview after interview between the countess and the lawyer. The proposition, however, was made to the Courtons, and was absolutely refused by them. Ongar Park was accepted on behalf of the mother of the present earl; but as regarded the money, the widow of the late earl was assured by the elder surviving brother that no one doubted her right to it, or would be a party to accepting it from her. "Then," said Lady Ongar, "it will accumulate in my hands, and I can leave it as I please in my will."

"As to that, no one can control you," said her brother-in-law, who went to Tenby to see her; "but you must not be angry if I advise you not to make any such resolution."

Such hoards never have good results." This good result, however, did come from the effort which the poor broken-spirited woman was making — that an intimacy, and at last a close friendship, was formed between her and the relatives of her deceased lord.

And now my story is done. My readers will easily understand what would be the future life of Harry Clavering and his wife after the completion of that tour in Italy and the birth of the heir, the preparations for which made the tour somewhat shorter than Harry had intended. His father, of course, gave up to him the shooting, and the farming of the home farm, and, after a while, the management of the property. Sir Henry preached occasionally — believing himself able to preach much oftener than he did — and usually performed some portion of the morning service.

"Oh yes," said Theodore Burton, in answer to some comfortable remark from his wife, "Providence has done very well for Florence. And Providence has done very well for him also; but Providence was making a great mistake when he expected him to earn his bread."

Dr. Ori, a native of Tuscany, well known in Italy for his scientific acquisitions, especially in relation to natural history, has lately returned to Cairo from a very adventurous expedition into the interior of Africa. Availing himself of his official position as Physician-in-Chief of the Soudan country, conferred on him by the Viceroy of Egypt, and under the especial patronage of Victor Emmanuel, who defrayed the expenses of the expedition, Dr. Ori, accompanied by his wife, an Italian lady of great endurance and courage, made a journey which has occupied nearly seven years. His principal researches have been carried on in the little-known territories of Darzaleh and Darfur, the latter bordering on the Egyptian Pashalic, and in the country adjoining the Blue and White Nile. Dr. Ori's explorations, which have extended over five thousand miles, have led him into districts never before visited by a

European, in which he has collected a vast number of scientific treasures, including many specimens of rare animals and plants. Dr. Ori is now engaged in preparing his journals for publication, which, we have reason to believe, contain matter which will add largely to our knowledge of Central Africa. When his literary undertaking is completed, we understand that it is Dr. Ori's intention to renew his researches in Africa, his experience derived from his late exploration rendering him very sanguine of success. We may add that Dr. Ori's medical knowledge, acquired during a long course of study at the University of Pisa, and his acquaintance with various African dialects, were of great advantage to him in his intercourse with the natives, whom he appears to have had the good fortune to have conciliated in a very remarkable manner.

From the Quarterly Review.

1. *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb, consisting of unpublished Letters, with Sketches of his Companions.* By Serjeant Talford. London, 1848.
2. *Charles Lamb; a Memoir.* By Barry Cornwall. London, 1866.

AMONG the modes of expression by which philosophers have sought to classify the divisions of our species, the nickname is obviously the most convenient. It condenses the tediousness of description into the tersest compactness of epigram; and finds ready acceptance with the facile ill-nature which the learned Huet assures us is the prevalent characteristic of an intelligent public. According to that venerable authority, there is nothing which men in polite society enjoy more than unflattering representations of their fellow-creatures. This, he asserts, is the main reason why Tacitus is so popular with scholars — displeasing likenesses of humanity being especially pleasant to the cultivators of humane letters.

To a certain set of writers who flourished at the earlier part of this brilliant century, and who were supposed to live in close intercourse with each other, and to have many attributes of mannerism in common, one of the wits of Edinburgh applied the unalluring denomination of the Cockney School. It was a name sufficiently significant of ridicule to frighten away bashful admirers, and had just so much of that kind of one-sided justice which belongs to satire, as not to seem to the ordinary public an unfair definition.

We know not how it is that among civilized nations England stands alone in imputing to that development of the national intellect more peculiarly metropolitan, the defective liberality, whether in the culture of letters or in the survey of men and manners which in other countries is rather ascribed to the denizens of provinces. Cicero find a want of 'urbanitas,' in those writers who lived remote from the Roman capital, and narrowed their views of the world to the limited range of a coterie. It is praise to a French author to say that on life and manners he writes like a thoroughbred Parisian; it is the reverse of praise to an English author on such subjects to say that he writes like a thoroughbred Londoner. To him we impute exactly the same spirit of clique — the same partial estimate of himself and the privileged few with whom he lives in sympathy of taste and recipro-

ty of compliment, which are the alleged characteristics of a provincial genius. The Cockney is the archetype of the Londoner east of Temple Bar, and is as grotesquely identified with the bells of Bow as Quasimodo with those of Notre Dame. In the men on whom this metropolitan distinction was conferred, including writers not less remarkable than Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, and Charles Lamb, we cannot honestly affirm that there was no element of cocknification. Though differing much from each other in character and in direction of intellect, they agreed in this — they all so far rejected the urbanizing tendencies of a great metropolis, that they moved in as small a circle as if they had lived in a country town. In their publications they quote and praise, quarrel and make it up with each other, as if, like the Chinese, they confined the map of the civilized world to their celestial empire, and inscribed on the space left outside of the circle, 'Corners of earth inhabited by barbarians.' The Waverley Novels can excite no interest in Lamb: it is a matter of doubt whether he was ever seduced into reading them. Hazlitt, indeed, succumbs to their enchantment, but atones for such praise as he bestows on the fictions by declaring that 'he despises their author as the meanest of mankind.' Lamb has a lofty disdain for such a comparative pigmy as Byron. Hazlitt does not openly share in that disdain, but he implies it by the sneer with which he accompanies the stinted measure of his praise. According to him, Byron 'seldom gets beyond force of style, and 'his poetry consists mostly of a tissue of superb commonplaces.' With the contemporaneous literature of the continent the professors of this school reject all acquaintance; among the rising generation of writers in England it is only their own Alumni whom they deem worthy of notice. Those, they regard with indiscriminate favour — equally kind to a Sheridan Knowles and a Janus Weathercock. Hunt, the least exclusive of the coterie, in vain commends Shelley and Keats to the cordial welcome of his associates. Hazlitt speaks of Keats, indeed, when Keats was dead, with a certain civility, such as a strong man compassionately bestows on a promising though sickly child. But of Shelley, in Shelley's lifetime, his criticism is that of stern contempt. According to him, Shelley 'is not a poet, but a sophist, a theorist, a controversial writer in verse; he gives us for representations of things rhapsodies of words; he paints gaudy, flimsy, allegorical pictures on gauze, on the cobwebs of his own brain' (Hazlitt's 'Plain

Speaker: On People of Sense') — an estimate of Shelley, from which Lamb does not greatly differ. In fact, when the chiefs of this oligarchy commend to our reverence the men of their own day, they compliment each other — Hunt praises Hazlitt, Hazlitt praises Hunt; Lamb praises both, and by both is praised. We must make one honourable exception to this exclusive co-admiration. The Cockney School acknowledged the genius of the Lake School, and paved the way to that appreciation of Wordsworth and Coleridge which the pertinacity of critics has at last wrung from the passive assent of the general public. But this so-called Cockney School was, in much, an offshoot from the Lake School. Wordsworth and Coleridge exercised a predominant power over the minds of Hunt, Hazlitt, and Lamb, and served greatly to determine the point of view from which the two latter regarded the form and substance of contemporaneous poetic creation. And perhaps they found in the homage they rendered to the great Poets of the Lake School an excuse for the depreciation of other contemporaries more popularly admired. It is but just to the Public of that day to preface remarks intended to do equal justice to the merits of the writers referred to, with this admission of their characteristic failings; because it was but natural that the Public should hesitate before confirming the reputation which the members of a coterie so dogmatically bestowed upon each other. The Public has always a certain interest in guarding its judgments from the dictations of a critical clique.

Of the three eminent writers to whom this unlucky appellation of Cockney was popularly assigned, Hazlitt deserved it least in the literal sense of the word, and most in the symbolical. In the literal sense of the word he did not indeed deserve it at all. Hazlitt was no Londoner. By origin he was Irish; he himself a native of Shropshire. But in the symbolical sense of the word, he was the most obnoxious to the ridicule it conveyed, partly because, once identified with the set of writers to whom it was applied, he stood forth the most aggressive and the most provocative, and carrying out into the fullest display the sins attributed to the Cockney School. He of the three best answers to his own sprightly and accurate definition of Cockney: 'Your true Cockney,' saith Hazlitt, 'is your only true leveller. Let him be as low as he will, he fancies he is as good as anybody else.' The faults of Hazlitt were the more disagreeable because the man was one of those warm-blooded crea-

tures whom we wish to like if they will but let us. And though he does his best to prevent our liking him, it is not in his power to prevent any one who knows the English language from admiring. The admiration is uneasy, chequered, qualified, but it is admiration still. If Hazlitt lacked the poetic, genius of his two gentler friends, he was gifted with an eloquence more masculine. The fibre of his brain was less fine than theirs, but it was of stronger tissue. He had in early youth cultivated his reasoning faculty with a patient study unknown to those playmates of the muse, and that faculty was sufficiently acute to have achieved him no mean repute in metaphysical speculation, or in the more practical domain of judicial criticism, had it not been constantly obscured and perverted by passions fiercely combative, which, accompanied with an arrogant self-esteem, and a very limited knowledge of the world, too often deprived his judgment of value, because they robbed it of charity and candour. And it was exactly where his knowledge of the world was the most deficient that his passions and his arrogance led him to parade his defect with the loftiest ostentation. He delighted in analytical comments on the public characters of his time; and it is difficult to conceive any man of letters with so profound an ignorance, not only of the characters thus superciliously depicted, but of the estimates formed of them by persons the most competent to know. What can be more ludicrously unlike the speaking of the late Marquis Wellesley (in his most brilliant day; the date of the criticism is April 13, 1813, and on his special subject, Indian affairs) than the following attempt at description which heads the collection of Hazlitt's 'Political Essays': 'We confess those of his (Lord Wellesley's) speeches which we have heard appear to us prodigies of physical prowess and intellectual imbecility; the ardour of his natural temperament stimulating and controlling the ordinary faculties of his mind; the exuberance of his animal spirits contending with the barrenness of his genius produce a degree of dull vivacity, of paraded insignificance and impotent energy, which is without any parallel but itself.' Who does not here see a man in love with his own style, and exulting in smart impertinences about an orator of whose attributes of mind and speaking he was ignorant as a babe unborn?

This is but one instance out of the many we might quote, not of caricature (for in caricature there is something of truth), but of utter dissimilarity between the original

man and the fanciful image which the student of Titian would have us accept as a portrait. And we select this special instance, because elsewhere we might suppose the common sense of the artist distorted by private vindictiveness or political hate. But Mr. Hazlitt could never have had his feelings hurt by Lord Wellesley, nor could there have been anything calculated to stir up his gall in a speech upon our Indian Empire. Hazlitt never pretended to be a cosmopolitan reformer. No man ever ridiculed with a keener irony the affectation of universal benevolence. He cared about the Indian Empire as little as he did about Lord Wellesley. He would have resolved both into limbo for the head of any wrinkled old hag on the canvass of Rembrandt. Hurried away by a temperament thus vehemently aggressive, there was scarcely a section of opinion or a class of fellow-subjects whom William Hazlitt did not, at one time or other, go out of his way to offend. A bitter politician, though without giving us the slightest idea what he would destroy, except the principle of hereditary monarchy, or what he would reconstruct, except universal suffrage; equally a fanatic against constitutional kings and for Napoleonic autocracy, he smote with the same unexpected swing of his flail Tory, Whig, Radical, Reformer, Utopianist, Benthamite, Churchman, Dissenter, Free-thinker. He believed in nothing but Hazlittism *plus* Napoleonism. There was but one Hazlitt, and Napoleon was his prophet. That which he recognized in himself was unscrupulous force. Unscrupulous force had been crowned in Napoleon. Such amiable disciples as the late Serjeant Talfourd tell us that Hazlitt viewed in Napoleon the principle of force opposed to the legitimate Right Divine. Napoleon commenced his career not by dethroning the legitimate Right Divine, but by cannonading King Mob. And a man must know very little of Hazlitt's works who is not aware that, though he speaks of legitimate kings with the hate of a French sansculotte, he speaks of the common people with the scorn of a Venetian oligarch. In fact, Hazlitt's judgment is so constantly coloured by his spleen, that he is scarcely more consistent in his likings than in his dislikings. Even in literature, the few contemporaries for whom at one moment he professes the deepest reverence, to whose publications he ascribes, not untruly, the deepest obligations in the forming or developing of his own intellectual powers, are addressed with the same disdainful insolence with which, perched on the wall

of his small enclosure, he crows scornful defiance to such foes afar off as the Wellesleys and Cannings,—if these guides, philosophers, fathers, friends, do but exercise their liberty of thought in a way disapproved by William Hazlitt. He tells us himself of the marked kindness with which, in his earliest youth, he had been distinguished by Coleridge, and of the lasting effect on his own mind produced by his first contact with that vast and luminous intelligence:—

'I was at that time' (he says in his own picturesque and vivid diction) 'dumb, inarticulate, helpless, like a worm by the way-side, crushed, bleeding, lifeless. But now, bursting from the deadly bands

"that bound them
With Styx nine times round them,"

my ideas float on winged words, and as they expand their plumes catch the golden light of other years. My soul, indeed has remained in its original bondage, dark, obscure, with longings infinite and unsatisfied; my heart, shut up in the prison-house of this rude clay, has never found nor will it find a heart to speak to; but that my understanding also did not remain dull and brutish, or at length found a language to express itself, I owe to Coleridge.'—(Hazlitt's 'Literary Remains,' vol. ii., on 'My First Acquaintance with Poets.')

One might suppose that such reminiscence would have sufficed to induce a man of feeling so warm to soften any blow which he might afterwards feel it a painful duty to inflict upon the greatest of his intellectual benefactors. To suppose this would be to misjudge William Hazlitt. The Lay Sermon of Mr. Coleridge displeases him, and he exhausts all his powers of sarcasm for expressions of contempt best fitted to cut into the heart of the sensitive man of genius, through whom his own understanding 'had found a language to express itself:—

'No one,' he says, 'ever yet gave Mr. Coleridge a penny for his thoughts.' . . . 'He is the secret Tattle of the Press. . . . He is the dog in the manger of literature; an intellectual Marplot who will neither let anybody else come to a conclusion nor come to one himself.' . . . He lives in the belief of a perpetual lie, and in affecting to think what he pretends to say,' &c., &c.—(Hazlitt's 'Political Essays on Coleridge's Lay Sermon.')

Nor is this ferocity of censure confined to the political articles of a newspaper, to be palliated by the hot blood of spontaneous

debate. In one of his most elaborate compositions ('On the Prose Style of Poets') he compares the prose style of Coleridge 'to the second-hand finery of a lady's maid:—'

'With bits of tarnished lace and worthless frippery, he assumes a sweeping Oriental costume. . . . He is swelling and turgid, everlastingly aiming to be greater than his subject, filling his fancy with fumes and vapours in the pangs and throes of miraculous parturition, and bringing forth only still-births.'

Wordsworth, whom elsewhere he exalts to the seventh heaven, he treats with the same measureless contempt when Wordsworth takes the liberty to say something which Hazlitt disapproves. Then thus doth the idolater fustigate the idol:—

'The spirit of Jacobin poetry is rank egotism. We know an instance; it is that of a person who founded a school of poetry on sheer humanity, on ideal boys and mad mothers, and on Simon Lee the old huntsman. The secret of the Jacobin poetry and the anti-Jacobin politics of this writer is the same. His lyrical poetry was a cant of humanity about the commonest people, to level the great with the small, and his political poetry is a cant of loyalty, to level Bonaparte with kings and hereditary imbecility. This person admires nothing that is admirable, feels no interest in anything interesting, no grandeur in anything grand, no beauty in anything beautiful. He tolerates nothing but what he himself creates'—

and so on.

Strangely enough, after so flattering a description of Wordsworth, Hazlitt actually quarrels with Lamb because, when receiving Wordsworth at his house, he does not specially invite Hazlitt to meet him!

We do not adduce these violent breaches of that 'comity' which, between those who aspire to represent the literature of nations, should form the same unwritten law which it does between nations themselves, in any spirit of undue harshness to the memory of the passionate offender; but partly because without noticing them it would be impossible to arrive at a fair critical estimate of the genius and character of William Hazlitt, and partly because they suffice for answer to the complaint made by Serjeant Talfourd and other enthusiastic partisans of this powerful writer that Hazlitt was assailed and misrepresented in his own day, ignored by dignified reviewers, or libelled by malevolent critics. How could it be supposed that much courtesy would be shown to a man who displayed so little? One does not readily make

room in any decorous society for a visitor who slaps everybody's face and treads on everybody's toes. And certainly, were there not very great merits to set off against faults so grave, and which we can survey with a calmer eye now that Time has become 'the beautifier of the dead,' we should scarcely be tempted to rescue the writings of William Hazlitt from the neglect into which, with the mass of the reading public, they have fallen.

But amidst all these intolerant prejudices and this wild extravagance of apparent hate, there are in Hazlitt from time to time—those times ~~not infrequent~~—outbursts of sentiment scarcely surpassed among the writers of our century for tender sweetness, rapid perceptions of truth and beauty in regions of criticism then but sparingly cultured—nay, scarcely discovered—and massive fragments of such composition as no hand of ordinary strength could hew out of the unransacked mines of our native language.

Nor is it without a melancholy and softening interest that we detect sometimes, amidst the very lucubrations that most displease the taste by virulent personalities, some excuse for the writer's indulgence of hate in the sorrows of his private life, the mortifications of his literary career; and imagine that we can trace that bitterness of spirit which taints the current flow of his mind to its springs in disappointed affection and baffled aspiration. For it is one of the peculiarities in the egotism of this writer to launch into savage diatribes on the faults to which his acute self-consciousness made him aware that he was most subjected. He would insist on the virtue of courtesy, denounce the vituperation which comes from envy at another's success, call before him the phantom of his own mind, arraign it, and condemn. Surely there is something of the soured philanthropy of Alceste in the burst of wild declamation with which he concludes his ironical Essay 'On the Pleasure of Hating:—'

'Mistaken as I have been in my public and private hopes, calculating others from myself, and calculating wrong; always disappointed where I placed most reliance; the dupe of friendship and the fool of love, have I not reason to hate and despise myself? Indeed I do; and chiefly for not having hated and despised the world enough.'

This is not the writing of a cynical hate, but of a passionate despair; and, unless we mistake, of such despair as is never wrung from a strong man except where the heart

is constitutionally warm and the aspirations originally noble. Such a despair the best and greatest have conceived when, walking in the Valley of Shadow, they forget that the visibility of shadow is the evidence of light.

In his thoughts on the intellectual character of William Hazlitt (prefixed to his *Literary Remains*) Serjeant Talfourd says, with commendable brevity of distinction:—

‘As an author, Mr. Hazlitt may be contemplated principally in three aspects, as a moral and political reasoner, as an observer of character and manners, and as a critic in literature and painting.’ Serjeant Talfourd adds, ‘It is in the first character *only* that he should be followed with caution.’

Only in the first character! The shade of Serjeant Talfourd must pardon us! We think that in each of the three aspects those who did not follow William Hazlitt with caution would be led into innumerable bogs and pitfalls. We have already sufficiently implied how little he is to be trusted, not only as a political reasoner, but as an observer of character. For an observer of manners apart from character he had some marked advantages in his early study of metaphysics, and his passion for connecting the outward manners of society with the inward motives of man in the abstract; nor less in a command of many varieties of style, but especially in the epigrammatic terseness which makes the excellence of the French writers upon manners. But one has only to glance over the leading features of his biography to perceive how exceedingly limited was the range permitted to his observation. The son of an Unitarian minister in a small provincial town, intended originally for the profession of a painter, relinquishing the hope of that calling, to which he was ardently attached, from the conviction that in it he could not attain to his own standard of excellence, but to the last, with eye and heart ever turning from the ‘full tide of life in Fleet Street,’ to dwell enamoured on the likenesses of humanity limned upon canvas; thrown a stranger upon London, inexperienced and raw; forcing from ‘that stony-hearted mother of orphans’ a diploma to practise upon ‘public characters,’ first as a newspaper reporter, and next as a newspaper contributor; in proportion as, feeling his own powers, he stormed his way onward—rather contracting than expanding, his commerce with mankind—quarrelling, as he himself tells us, with the very friends he had at first

made, and even those friends, for the most part, of minds bookish and eccentric as his own; selecting his favourite resort in a sequestered village inn, with half a dozen volumes of authors a century or two old; studying the humours of no class, with a fastidious refinement that shunned the vulgar, with a pride that kept him aloof from the great, it is difficult to conceive any man less adapted by circumstance and habit for the comprehensive delineation of contemporaneous manners. And it is when he attempts to vie with the Horace Walpoles and La Bruyères, when he aims his satire at polite society, and illustrates his page with such newspaper anecdotes of what passed in courts and ‘gilded saloons’ as a wit about town would invent as a hoax, but no man about town would repeat as a truth, that with all his native elevation of intellect, all his intuitive perception of poetic grace and beauty, we are reluctantly compelled to admit that he becomes vulgar, and vulgar according to his own true analysis of the elements in vulgarity,—vulgar from affectation, the affectation of knowing intimately things which he could not possibly know at all.

His mistake was aggravated, because it was a kind of knowledge which, as a wise man, it was not necessary he should possess, but the pretence to which any fool could detect. When, in criticising Molière’s great comedy, *L’Ecole des Femmes*, he speaks of Arnolphe as the *husband* of Agnes, not many of his English readers would be sufficiently familiar with the play to perceive how hastily the critic had read or how imperfectly he remembered it—Agnes being, of course, unmarried, and the whole comic conception of her character lost if she were a wife. But when Hazlitt parades as a matter of fact on which to ground argument or declamation some scrap of servants’ hall gossip about kings and statesmen, Sir Fopling Flutter can look down on his ignorance and Benjamin Backbite moralize on his malice. On the other hand, when as an essayist on contemporaneous manners, Hazlitt writes from his own personal experience as observer, and in good humour with the subject selected, he can give grace and dignity to things commonplace or coarse. Of this, the essential faculty of genius, his description of the prize-fight between Hickman and Neate may suffice for example. It is with very felicitous art that he adapts to a description of one of the rudest and most violent scenes admitted into civilized life that character of style most associated with our notions of

classic serenity and decorous grace. In the choice of words, in the rhythm of period and cadence, we seem to read a paper in the 'Spectator.' It reminds us both of Addison and Steele — the exquisite neatness of the one, the spirited ease of the other.

It is, however, as a critic, not of manners, but of books, of pictures, and of the stage, that Hazlitt chiefly excels; though even here we have need of all 'the caution' which Serjeant Talfourd implies that we no longer require when this writer quits the ground of moral and political controversy. For, as we have before observed, Hazlitt's judgment is never so beyond the control of the mood of temper in which he writes as to keep him consistent in praise or blame. And we shall find in one passage the most direct contradictions of opinions he has advanced in another. Even in his criticism on pictures or on actors, where his mind is least disturbed by passion, he cannot demand our admiration for one of his favourites, but he must wantonly immolate some rival renown. If he does justice to Reynolds, he must depreciate Gainsborough, if he expatiates on the humour of Hogarth, he must deny that Wilkie has any humour at all. If he extols Kean, he must degrade Young. And because Madame Pasta was a grand actress, poor Mademoiselle Mars must be abased into an artificial machine. There is nothing more adverse to the true spirit of criticism than these invidious comparisons between persons who essentially differ. In art as in nature varieties cannot be illustrated by opposing in a hostile spirit things that are of dissimilar genus. We grant this truth at once in the objects of nature, and we sin against criticism if we do not recognize it in art. No man, if he would praise a race horse, thinks it necessary to abuse a lion; no man who calls on us to admire the rose asks us to despise the violet; no man who invites the eye to the shimmer of the ash-leaves thinks we cannot adequately enjoy the sight unless we point a finger of scorn at the solid repose of the cedar. But in objects of art it is the trick of commonplace critics to insist on comparisons or contrasts, not for the purpose of showing the beauty appropriate to each, but in order to make the beauty of the one a reason why there must be something deformed in the other. That Hazlitt descended to this trick was in itself enough to depose him from the highest rank of critics. Criticism stops where injustice begins. In criticisms on literature his faults of caprice and temper become much more glaring than they are in his discourses on pictorial art, and are ex-

pressed with infinitely more presumption, because with infinitely less knowledge of his subject. Not knowing a word of German, he calls Goethe's 'Faust' a mere 'piece of abortive perverseness, and not to be named in a day with Marlowe's.' Telling us that Ford only wrote one play either acted or worth acting, he adds and 'that would no more bear acting than Lord Byron and Goethe together could have written it.'

These examples, which might be multiplied *ad nauseam*, suffice to show how little we can dispense with that caution which Serjeant Talfourd invites us to dismiss in seeking intercourse with this powerful but irregular intellect, even on its happiest ground. It is not as a guide that Hazlitt can be useful to any man. His merit is that of a companion in districts little trodden — a companion strong and hardy, who keeps our sinews in healthful strain; rough and irascible, whose temper will constantly offend us if we do not steadily preserve our own; but always animated, vivacious, brilliant in his talk; suggestive of truths, even where insisting on paradoxes; and of whom when we part company we retain impressions stamped with the crownmark of indisputable genius. We have said that Hazlitt cultivated his reasoning faculty as a metaphysician; and his earliest work, on the 'Principles of Human Action,' is a very extraordinary performance, considering the early age at which it was conceived and composed. To the abstract principle upon which it is grounded Hazlitt remained faithful to the close of his life; that principle pervades the best of his writings, colours many of their lovelier beauties, and throws a redeeming light upon many of their gloomier faults. The warmth of his heart revolted at the doctrine which traced the springs of all human virtues to an enlightened self-love. It was less with the austere disdain of a Stoic than with the cordial detestation of a lover of art, in whom romance in sentiment was inseparable from worthy conceptions of truth and nature, that he regarded that old Epicurean philosophy which, brought down to the drawing-room by Rochefoucauld and Helvetius, had of late been familiarized to the counter and adapted to the hutings by the utilitarianism, positive and political, of Jeremy Bentham. Hazlitt's work on the Principles of Human Action is intended to prove the natural disinterestedness of the human mind. Weapons in plenty against the Epicurean system may be taken from antique armouries, repolished, and whetted

anew; and we may observe, in passing, that perhaps no arguments in confutation of the philosophy of self-interest are more popularly adapted to a plain understanding than those to be found in Seneca. But Hazlitt was little acquainted with the labours of predecessors in the same cause; he conducted his argument as if it had been untouched. Where he says something that has been said before, it is in his own way, and ideas which, taken singly, had occurred to other minds, form themselves, when conceived by him, into original combinations. The fundamental principle in his metaphysical creed, that 'we are naturally interested in the welfare of others, through the same way, the same motives, the same mental operations by which we naturally pursue our own;' that, in a word, benevolence is as elementary as self-love in the principles of human action, is certainly a noble and generous doctrine, and enforced by Hazlitt with all the earnestness of his vigorous and fervid nature. And it was his faith in this doctrine that not only kept him aloof from those democratic reformers who exercised prevailing influence over the more educated members of the movement party, viz., the disciples of Mill and Bentham, but directed against their school of philosophy the instincts of his heart and the bias of his tastes, as well as the convictions of his reason.

We must notice as briefly as possible, the most ambitious of Hazlitt's numerous writings, and the one upon which he and some of his admirers most counted for enduring fame — 'The Life of Napoleon.' 'He lived,' says the writer of the preface to that history, 'to complete the "Life of Napoleon," and then laid down his own.'

We can say little or nothing to redeem this work from the oblivion into which it has already passed. It was altogether a mistake. Whatever intellectual qualities Hazlitt possessed, they were not those of a historian. He was naturally impatient of details; neither had he the temper nor the discipline of mind essential to comprehensive generalization. Even his proper beauties of style, when happiest, are but brilliant impertinences in historical composition. He sentimentalizes, digresses, declaims, in the wrong spirit and in the wrong place. He lacks the simplicity of a narrator. He lacks still more the impartiality of a judge. But were his History far better than it is, it could not have stood its ground against histories of the same stormy epoch and the same marvellous man written since Hazlitt's time.

It is, then, as a critic of Art in painting and in poetry that Hazlitt principally demands our admiration — demands and generally deserves, not indeed when he censures, but when he praises; when on those beauties which had so long elevated his thoughts and vivified his fancies he expatiates with all the enthusiasm of reverential love: — it is then that he deserves the eulogy bestowed on him by Leigh Hunt, and 'throws a light on art as from a painted window.'

Still more than as a critic Hazlitt excels as a writer of the Essay of Sentiment; when, in the spirit of his favourite Montaigne, he abandons himself fairly to self-commune and self-confession, when he unfolds to us, with a frankness at once melancholy and genial, the record of his early impressions, and makes us partners in the joys and the griefs of genius. For in essays of this kind the self-obtrusion to which we give the name of egotism is not a fault; it is the essential quality, infusing into desultory reveries the distinct vitality of individualised being. It is in this portion of his works that the most striking instances of Hazlitt's eloquence are to be found: an eloquence which though retaining the form of prose approaches near enough to poetry to bring before the reader's eye 'fantastic heights or hidden recesses' in the enchanted border land. Then, worthy of the praise he bestows on his favourite Poussin, 'words start up into images, thoughts become things. He clothes a dream, a phantom with form and colour, and the wholesome attribute of reality' (Hazlitt's 'Table-Talk,' vol. ii. On a Landscape by Nicholas Poussin).

Hazlitt's style, when at the best, is not that of a rhetorician, but in much that of an orator. It is spontaneous, varied, and glowing, full of illustrations that are rarely superfluous embellishments of fancy, but rather arguments lighted up. For between the rhetorical and the oratorical style there is the distinction which Mr. Pugin makes in architecture between constructed ornament and ornamental construction. The first (as recently observed in this Journal*) is merely for show, and does not affect the substance of the framework if removed; but the last, as in the columns and entablature of a Grecian temple, is part and parcel of the building itself, and to remove it would be to destroy the fabric.

In taking leave, not, we trust, ungenerously, of the most truculent assailant of

* 'Quarterly Review' for October, 1866, p. 443.

the political opinions held in this journal, and of the honoured contributors by whom it has been adorned, we would venture to suggest to the son who has so piously fulfilled the duties of executor to Hazlitt's literary remains, that one of his father's favourite assertions was that a part is greater than the whole. Hazlitt's fame is not sufficiently solid to bear the weight of the many volumes that are heaped upon it. Better for his reputation, and his chance of favour with coming generations, if this load were lightened. Year by year upon the collectors of books increases the difficulty of finding places in unelastic shelves for new comers, who can only be admitted by the ejection of old friends. We pause long before we make way for an essayist who carries in his train a *Valetaille* of some thirty volumes. Two-thirds of his suite are, at the best, costly and idle hangers-on. We have no room to spare for a company so numerous, and of which some are of very doubtful worth — *Lives of Napoleon*, essays on subjects of party politics; morbid outpourings of personal spite and grudges; all these have done their work, 'Home have gone and ta'en their wages.' Peace to them, provided they rest in peace. Now that their bones are marrowless, we desire not to disturb our peaceful hearths with their irascible goblins. But gladly would we welcome among the choicer prose works of our age and land some three or four volumes devoted to the more felicitous specimens of Hazlitt's genius. He needs but an abstract of his title-deeds to secure a fair allotment in the ground, already overcrowded, which has been quaintly described by a Scandinavian poet as the garden-land lying south between Walhalla and the sea.

To pass from Hazlitt to Leigh Hunt is like passing from a rough landscape sketch by Salvator, in which, according to Coleridge, the rocks take vague likeness of the human figure, to a garden scene by Lancret, with a group seated round a fountain engaged in dining off peaches and listening to a gentle shepherd who is playing a guitar or telling a pleasant story. Leigh Hunt is as constitutionally gay as Hazlitt is constitutionally saturnine. He has a sprightly sense of enjoyment, which he communicates to readers who will give themselves up to him, take him for what he is, and not frown or pish because he is not something else. He has a feminine love for pretty ornaments, and gets together quaint little trinkets, arranged so neatly and paraded with so amiable an air, that he wins our good nature to his side. We admire as curiosities

in his collection what might seem trifles in that of a ruder man. The neatness and prettiness of his style are not achieved without some apparent affectation; but the affectation is only apparent. To no writer can be more truly applied the saying attributed to Buffon — 'the style is the man.' A certain gracefulness in his plastic temperament made him love to associate his actual existence with small elegancies, which cheered his eye and gladdened his heart. He covers the walls of his prison room with a trellis paper, and can imagine that he is with Ariosto in Tuscan bowers. He goes into the poetic heaven at sight of 'an old looking saucer with a handle to it,' 'Its little shallow circle overflows for him with the milk and honey of a thousand pleasant associations.' 'This,' he exclaims, 'is one of the uses of having mantle-pieces!' You may often see on no very rich mantle-piece a representative body of all elements, physical and intellectual, a shell for the sea, a stuffed bird or some feathers for the air, a curious piece of mineral for the earth, a glass of water with some flowers in it for the visible process of creation, and underneath all is the bright and everpringing fire running up through them heavenwards, like Hope through materiality. We like to have any little curiosity of the mantle-piece kind within our reach and inspection.' A reader who feels himself inclined to score the amiable idiosyncrasy of mind which not only delights in these small adornments of our work-day life, but calls us off from our anxious cares or our vaulting aspirations to share in its harmless delight, is not a reader fitted to appreciate the genius of Leigh Hunt. 'Since trifles make the sum of human things,' Hunt, with no irrational philosophy, seeks to make trifles pleasant, and with no profitless poetry to extract from them an ideal happiness. Like the butterfly described by Spenser —

He pastures on the pleasures of each place,
Now sucking of the sap of herbe most meet,
Or of the dew which yet on them does lie,
Now in the same bathing his tender feet,
And then he percheth on some branch thereby,
To weather him and his moist wings to dry.

With a writer of so sunny a temperament it would be but a crabbed philosophy to provoke cause of serious quarrel. We cannot bring ourselves to look on Leigh Hunt in his character of rabid politician. His are not the wings that ride on the whirlwind and direct the storm —

'Now this, now that he tasteth tenderly,
Yet none of them he rudely doth disorder.'

Nor, in recognizing the general kindliness of disposition which characterized the man, are we unwilling to regard with lenity, as an exceptional aberration from his better nature, the ill-advised work on Lord Byron. And we are reconciled to this forbearance with a quieter conscience because we have reason to believe that Leigh Hunt himself sincerely regretted that he had been ever galled by a skin-deep wound to too sensitive a self-love into a breach of those hospitable laws which involve obligations upon personal honour. Of all Leigh Hunt's writings we like best his prose essays, and of these we like best the light and varied lucubrations contained in the 'Indicator.' Than this we do not know a more agreeable book in its own way, nor one that can be read more often with renewed pleasure in re-perusal. Hunt wanted breadth of colour and strength of hand for the filling up of any large canvas, and in such attempts he lost his own peculiar merits, which consist in smoothness of tone and delicacy of finish. He tells a short story of mingled fancy and sentiment with much grace and animation. 'The Hamadryad,' in the 'Indicator,' is beautifully conceived and composed. He can illustrate with a light not indeed very large nor searching, but of 'ray serene,' many little nooks and corners in the mind and heart of man, many minor beauties of form and expression in the authors he loved to study. But when he attempts a five-act drama or a prose fiction in three volumes, we become aware of his deficiencies. He has neither the art of constructing a sustained fable, nor the power of creating new characters of life-like size; above all, he wants passion, perhaps because he abounds in fancy. This last defect is transparent in 'Rimini,' a poem which has nevertheless many striking detached beauties, and, in spite of its disagreeable subject, is the best of his more ambitious works. In the same way, as a critic, he is worthy not only of praise but of study in detached observations upon what by the German Aristarchus are called 'particulars,' but he seems to us somewhat feeble in his grasp of 'generals.' He feels sensitively, and explains with lucid eloquence the poetry which lurks in a form of expression, in an artificial cadence, in a combination of melodious liquids. But we cannot grant that he has adequate comprehension of that highest form of 'imperial poetry' which retains its imperishable substance even when stripped of its felicitous

expressions and defrauded of its original music; that which, though subjected to the baldest translation, can never be reduced to prose, but, passing from land to land, varies its 'singing robes' in each, and secures its privilege of royalty in all.

In one of his most delightful essays, entitled 'My Books,' Hunt, speaking of the great writers who were book-lovers like himself, exclaims, 'How pleasant it is to reflect that all these lovers of books have themselves become books.' And after pursuing that thought through 'links of sweetness long drawn out,' concludes with a modest pathos, 'May I hope to become the meanest of these existences?' . . . 'I should like to remain visible in this shape. The little of myself that pleases myself I could wish to be accounted worth pleasing others. I should like to survive so, were it only for the sake of those who love me in private, knowing, as I do, what a treasure is the possession of a friend's mind when he is no more.'

We think few can read this very lovely passage and not sympathize cordially in the wish so nobly conceived and so tenderly expressed. Something not to be replaced would be struck out of the gentler literature of our century, could the mind of Leigh Hunt cease to speak to us in a book.

Charles Lamb has been more fortunate in propitiating friends and disarming enemies than either of the contemporaries whose names are popularly associated with his own, and to whose attributes we have devoted the preceding pages. His reputation, never angrily contested, has taken a deeper root than theirs, and spreads at present over a far wider surface. He needs not, as they yet do, the aid of the critic to take his rank among standard and popular writers. For this elder brother's share of favour he is indebted partly, no doubt, to a genius singularly sweet and conciliatory, partly also to the idiosyncracies of a personal character in moral harmony with the genius, and so uniting our love with our admiration that it pleases ourselves to praise him, and it almost becomes an act of ingratitude to blame.

Lamb is one of those rare favourites of the Graces on whom the gift of *charm* is bestowed — a gift not indeed denied to Hunt, but much more sparingly granted to him and much more alloyed in its nature — while it is almost the last attribute we can assign to the irritating and aggressive intellect of Hazlitt.

He is not without something of charm, even in those compositions in which his genius

appears to the least advantage. As a Drama, 'John Woodvil' has almost every defect that a Drama can have, and it is only in very rare passages that some happiness of expression or grace of versification atones for the general tameness of the language and the dissonance of the rhythm — yet still the work leaves a pleasing impression. We are not moved by the action of the play, but we are contented to enjoy in repose and calm the contemplation of that amiable mind which reflects itself in the current that quietly flows before us. 'Rosamond Gray' is a story which in ruder hands would have been disagreeable and painful, and, brief as it is, while aiming at the simplest form of narrative, it wants the truthfulness of incident essential to genuine simplicity. The victim meets her fate by an accident which seems highly improbable. A girl of sixteen, brought up as strictly as Rosamond Gray, does not leave her home in the depth of night without any motive stronger than a fancy that she should like to retrace the scenes through which she had walked all day with a female acquaintance, to wander amidst 'lonely glens, into a lonely copse, out of the hearing of any human habitation.' Or, if it be said this might possibly have happened in real life, the Natural which belongs to Art forbids the construction of a tragic story upon an impulse so exceptional, an accident so unusual. This is not the breach of a merely conventional rule in artistic narrative. It argues a want of the intuitive faculty requisite for constructing a well-told tale. Accident, as the cause of a tragic *dénouement*, is as inadmissible in narrative fiction as it is in dramatic; and the author who employs in either such an agency cannot achieve a genuine success, — a success that satisfies intellectual requirements. The punishment of the guilty man, Matravis, is an accident again: it is no consequence of his crime, it has no connection with the incidents in the story. He is wounded in a duel, with whom we know not; his wounds 'are unskilfully treated,' and so he dies. Other defects in the elementary requisites of 'story-telling,' scarcely less grave, might be pointed out in 'Rosamond Gray.' But we have said enough to show that Lamb's special genius was as little adapted to romantic narrative as it was to dramatic character and passion. Yet, with all its faults, 'Rosamond Gray' has an attraction which many a good novelist might envy, because there is in it that nameless sweetness of sentiment which constitutes the master-spell of the author.

But neither in these departments of literature nor in those minor poems — which are rather evidences of an exquisite poetic sensibility than achievements of poetic power — did the true genius of Charles Lamb find its natural scope. It is not on these that he rests the enduring reputation of 'Elia.' Happily for us and for him, he found in the pages of a Magazine precisely the field best suited to exercise, without overstraining, the faculties in which he excelled. As an Essayist, following the bent of his own mind — stamping on all that he wrote the vivid impression of his own rare individuality — he gave to the varieties of mankind a new character and left to his language a new style. As the character given was his own, so the style bequeathed was, with all its mannerism, perfectly natural to the man. It was no style invented and built up for a literary purpose. We have only to read his delightful correspondence to see that the quaint diction of 'Elia' was that in which he habitually expressed himself in familiar commune with his friends. Hence, artificial though it seem at the first glance, he is much more at his ease in it than when he writes in a style more natural to other men. In the last he forfeits originality, and gains nothing to compensate in exchange. The brevity to which he was compelled by the limited space that a Magazine allows to a contributor was favourable to Lamb's peculiar genius. It compelled him to concentrate his thoughts, and out of that concentration comes the pause of reflection which is propitious to felicity in wording; so that his essays are really marvellous for terseness of treatment and nicety of expression. 'Elia' is never verbose, yet never incomplete. You are not wearied because he says too much, nor dissatisfied because he says too little. In this inimitable sense of proportion, this fitness of adjustment between thought and expression, the prose of 'Elia' reminds us of the verse of Horace. Nor is the Essayist without some other resemblance to the Poet: in the amenity which accompanies his satire; in his sportive view of things grave; the grave morality he deduces from things sportive; his equal sympathy for rural and for town life; his constant good fellowship and his lenient philosophy. Here, indeed, all similitude ceases: the modern essayist advances no pretension to the ancient poet's wide survey of the social varieties of mankind; to his seizure of those large and catholic types of human nature which are familiarly recognizable in every polished community, every civilized

time; still less to that intense sympathy in the life and movement of the world around him which renders the utterance of his individual emotion the vivid illustration of the character and history of his age. Yet 'Elia' secures a charm of his own in the very narrowness of the range to which he limits his genius. For thus the interest he creates becomes more intimate and household.

Humour in itself is among the most popular gifts of genius; amiable humour among the most lovable. The humour of Charles Lamb is at once pure and genial; it has no malice in its smile. His keenest sarcasm is but his archest pleasantry. It is not of the very highest order, because the highest order necessitates the creation of characters self-developed in the action of romance or drama. Lamb is not Cervantes nor Molière; nor could he have created a Caleb Balderstone or a Major Dalgetty. Yet if it be not of the highest order, its delicacy places it among the rarest. A proverb has been defined to be the wisdom of many in the wit of one. There is much in the humour of Charles Lamb, and the terseness of style into which its riches are compressed that would merit this definition of a proverb. As Scott's humour is that of a novelist, and therefore objective, so Lamb's is that of an essayist, and eminently subjective. All that he knows or observes in the world of books or men becomes absorbed in the single life of his own mind, and is reproduced as part and parcel of Charles Lamb. If thus he does not create imaginary characters, Caleb Balderstones and Major Dalgettys, he calls up, completes, and leaves to the admiration of all time, a character which, as a personification of humour, is a higher being than even Scott has imagined, viz., that of Charles Lamb himself. Nor is there in the whole world of humorous creation an image more beautiful in its combinations of mirth and pathos. In the embodiment of humour, as it actually lived amongst us in this man, there is a dignity equal to that with which Cervantes elevates our delight in his ideal creation. Quixote is not more essentially a gentleman than Lamb. How we respect his manhood while we are charmed by his gentleness! What strength in the firm resolve, during his early stage of poverty and privation, to secure inviolate that independence from debt and pecuniary obligation which is almost inseparable from the maintenance of personal honour! To effect this object, with what noble cheerfulness he makes a jest of every minor sacrifice! Nor do we know in fiction anything

more touching, and yet more heroic, than the devotion with which he gives up his life from youth till age to the discharge of such a trust as the bravest nature, not made by love brave beyond the ordinary instincts of nature, could scarcely have dared to undertake. In a moment of insanity his sister stabs her mother to the heart. To use his own words in his letter to Coleridge: 'I was at hand only time enough to snatch the knife out of her grasp. She is at present in a mad-house, from whence I fear she must be moved to a hospital.' His father was imbecile. He alone takes care of the old man; when the old man dies, he alone takes charge of the unhappy sister.

'For her sake at the same time,' says Serjeant Talfourd, 'he abandoned all thoughts of love and marriage' (all hope of 'the Fairhaired,' whose image yet flits here and there across his page in later years, glimpses of a bygone dream), 'and with an income of scarcely more than 100*l.* a year derived from his clerkship, aided for a little while by the old aunt's small annuity, set out on the journey of life at twenty-two years of age, cheerfully with his beloved companion, endeared to him the more by her strange calamity, and the constant apprehension of a recurrence of the malady which had caused it.'

We add nothing to the picture conveyed in these few words; the words suffice to show the strength and the greatness in this man's nature; they account for the reverential affection he inspired, and for that subdued and serene melancholy which rarely saddens, but often sweetens, the music of his gentle laugh. The resolve to secure pecuniary independence with which Charles Lamb commenced life, aided by the simplicity of his tastes, gradually worked out its own success. And as we glance over the record of himself and the companions most associated with his literary career, he seems to stand out as the rich man among them—the host around whom they gathered every week as welcome guests. True that the board is sufficiently Socratic, but it is pleasant to think how little the hospitality of a man of genius need cost him when he adds to 'the cold joint and the foaming tankard' the eloquence and the wit not to be found at the board of Dives. Most of his familiar associates were brilliant talkers. Leigh Hunt was always animated and lively; he talked as he wrote. Hazlitt, painfully shy before strangers, was easily drawn forth by the first jest of Lamb into confident display of his singular powers of language. Godwin was considered a dull

proser by these quick wits and vivid declaimers; but we are old enough to have heard Godwin talk in the society of ordinary mortals, and there he was well worth hearing, nor without a grim jocularly of sarcasm. A later guest in those symposia was the charming poet from whom so much was then expected, and whose sweet note will be more clearly heard hereafter, when noisier singers are hushed in night: he who, himself a veteran, has just recorded the pleasant recollections of his youth, and added to the *Amenities of Literature*, Barry Cornwall's *Reminiscences of Lamb*. There, too, on rare occasions, Wordsworth might be seen and heard; but of his visits the records are brief and scanty. If somewhat in the background, still conspicuous amidst, and bending over, all, we behold the vast front of Coleridge. For ever there, when absent in the body, he is visible in the spirit. From his intellect Hazlitt's took light and warmth. To his imagination Hunt was indebted for his happiest illustrations of poetic art. To Lamb he was more than philosopher and poet—he was the dearest of friends, the most spiritual of teachers; and as we could form but an imperfect notion of Lamb if we abstracted from his life its intercourse with Coleridge, so we should but superficially comprehend the intellectual character of our own time, if we saw but in Coleridge, as we are commonly invited to see, a man of incomplete and desultory genius, purposing much and performing little. This erring estimate of the peculiar properties of Coleridge has been founded perhaps on his own modest self-reproaches. He could not consummate the whole of that which he designed; and he therefore speaks of himself as a painter of outlines, a sculptor of fragments. In this he did but confess that distinction between ideal excellence and practical performance which cannot fail to be inly felt by every man who unites in a high degree imagination and intellect. For though the intellect suggests to the imagination the conception of any given work, and sustains the imagination throughout the doing of it, nothing which the imagination can do quite satisfies the intellect when done. Hence, judging by the sonnets in which he intimates his disdain of the works on which his life was spent, and by the indifference with which he left those works to their fate among the other properties of the Globe Theatre, Shakespeare would probably have told us that he never fully wrought out that which was in him, and that we saw of his genius but outlines and fragments. Hence Descartes, the

most imaginative of mathematicians, sought, at the very outset of his career, for modes to prolong human life to the age of the patriarchs, because within the limits of threescore years and ten it seemed to him impossible to accomplish more than outlines and fragments of the designs he conceived as wholes. A man of superior genius does not require critics to show him his defects; if he is to correct those defects and approach nearer to his ideal, he may need critics to reassure him as to his merits. This was not the good fortune of Coleridge. Of the men to be named in the same breath with him, some were enthusiastically lauded, some vehemently abused; Coleridge was ignored: and in those lauded and those abused, equally, through praise or censure, made famous in their time, could be distinctly traced the informing genius of the man ignored. For here we come to the special idiosyncrasy of Coleridge, and that which makes his grand life, not—as his duller disciples would attenuate it into—a dreamy abstraction, but a strong, an enduring, and a colossal entity. The distinguishing attribute of his genius is this; it was not merely original, it was originating, it penetrated the genius of others, it originated their originality—and this in ways not only so many, but so diverging and so opposed. In 'Christabel' and the 'Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner,' he originates the lyrical narrative as it afterwards expanded in 'Marmion' and the 'Siege of Corinth.' In other poems, more devoted to musical contrivance, to sensuous glow of description, to human passion chastened and spiritualized, he originates the poetry that succeeds to Scott and Byron, from Shelley and Keats to Tennyson. All that he originates, fused into other minds, becomes in those minds original. But Coleridge's influence does not limit itself to poets, it extends to reasoners, and abides with us at this day in the thoroughfares of positive life. To comprehend, in this, the influence of Coleridge, we must contrast with it the influence of an antagonistic genius—also originating as well as original—the influence of Bentham. We remember well, in our own green college days, the effect which Bentham produced on the mind of the then rising generation. There was something captivating even to the poets—whom, still more rigidly than Plato, Bentham would have banished from his republic—in the brevity of his royal roads into political science—in the sparkle of his aphorisms—in the decision with which he trampled under foot not less the vulgar commonplaces

of radical fustian than the foil and tinsel of courtly adulation; something captivating, too, even in his scholar-like wit and raciness of style, when (as in his 'Essay on Usury') Bentham himself completes his own designs, and does not, as in most of his later works, merely present the sinew and bone of his ideas to the Frankensteins who construct into a shape so portentously unhandsome the giant intended to be an improvement on the standard form of mankind. The sole great thinker of the time who, with but little direct reply to Bentham on special points, stood opposed to him in substance and spirit, and intellectual mastery over earnest minds, was this mighty Coleridge, of whom sciolists talk as of a moon-stricken dreamer. Rich in the learning of the schools, richer still in a treasury of thought on which his own sovereign mintage is stamped, it is Coleridge who has shown how little the liberty of human reason and the requirements of human life can be pent up in the close wall-works of Bentham. On young men of genius, who, the more they are by impulse poetical, are the more, by the poetry within them, constrained to examine into 'truths severe,' the intellect of Coleridge flashed like a ray from heaven. He did not so much furnish special weapons against a school essentially material as he fitted the reason of intellectual man, taken as a whole, to strike down the arguments which appealed to him as a material atom, confused and lost amidst a perishable conglomeration of atoms, with as little of freedom and as little of soul as an emmet at work in an ant-hill.

It would have been enough for the completeness of any individual life to have originated in the poetic and the ratiocinative forms of truth a millionth part of the ideas which owed their origin to Coleridge. It is Coleridge who first made England aware of the riches of German philosophy and German song; and in him originate whatever influences the higher spirit of German genius has exercised upon the English mind. And how much of that earnestness of aim which signalizes the clergy of the younger generation, and brings to the service of the Church a scholarship so enlarged, and an enthusiasm so chastened from sectarian bigotry, is to be traced to the new spirit which Coleridge infused into theological learning, exalting the mission of the preacher, as Fichte exalted the vocation of the scholar! It was much, too, in that day — it would have been much in any day, for such effect, on minds hesitating

between belief and disbelief, as belongs to authority and example — that the ablest and the boldest investigator of truth which the age could boast gave to revealed religion no qualified adhesion, no conventional acquiescence, but the deep-felt, clear-spoken convictions of an intellect subtler than Hume's, more eloquent than Rousseau's, more comprehensive than Voltaire's. In fact, Coleridge exerted so large an influence over so many of those minds which are in themselves reproductive, and yield in the sheaf what they receive in the germ, that if we were asked 'What he had done in his life?' it might be enough to answer, 'He has lived.' We might almost suppress reference to his own writings, we might point to the writings of others; to recognize the true worth of that life in its vivifying power over other lives, we must, indeed, look around, but we must also look upward, searching for its traces wherever some fertile eminence, dominating the level table-land of thought, expands to a nearer sunbeam the purple of a richer vintage or the gold of an ampler harvest.

It is true that the vast effect which the genius of Coleridge has exercised on our age was not produced only by the suggestive character of his written compositions, in which, as Pliny says of Greek masterpieces of art, 'more is felt than understood.' Much is due to the charm and the power of his oral eloquence. He left impressions that endured through a lifetime on those who met and heard him in his more felicitous moments. So that if he had written nothing, he would still have done much of that work which we commonly ascribe to writers. It is not absolutely necessary that a man should write in order to inspire, to harmonize, and to perpetuate ideas, out of which systems arise and schools are formed. Socrates himself wrote nothing; but 'Socrates taught Xenophon and Plato.' The minds of Xenophon and Plato were the works he left behind him. It is only, however, a very superior genius in whom ideas thus spontaneously cast off in familiar discourse can set into movement the genius of great writers, and wring in others the words by which those ideas are borne on through space. There is in this power something beyond even the eloquence of public orators. For it is the business of orators not so much to suggest new ideas to writers as to give warmth and force to ideas which writers have already expressed.

We have submitted to our readers these views of the peculiar genius of Coleridge,

and of the large results it achieved, in order to suggest to some critic more competent than ourselves to estimate and apportion the multiform capacities of a man so munificently endowed some slight hints for the refutation of the fallacious charge of 'wasted powers' popularly urged against him.

We think that in this accusation there is a complete misconception of the real nature of Coleridge's genius, and that, obeying the customary law of genius, he actually did that which he was mentally best fitted to do.

It is true that in his visionary moments, Coleridge drew up prospectuses, as it were, of vast designs never fulfilled, that he sketched maps of the El-Dorados he desired to colonize and declined to visit. But, if in schemes so projected his imagination deceived his understanding, we hold it fortunate that his understanding subsequently triumphed over his imagination. For, in the fine thought of Cowley —

'Life did never to one man allow
Time to discover worlds and conquer too.'

Any critic of sound common sense has only, firstly, to glance at the programmes of the works Coleridge proposed to write, and, secondly, to examine fairly the generic characteristics of the things he did write, in order to be quite sure that he *would* have wasted his powers had he seriously toiled to realize the vision in 'Kubla Khan' —

'Reach the caverns measureless to man
And build his dome in air.'

Of the eighteen works which Mr. Joseph Cottle says, with reproachful groan, 'Mr. Coleridge intended to write, and not one of which he effected,' how many are there for which we would exchange 'Kubla Khan' itself, fragment though it be? 'At the top of the list,' says Mr. Cottle, 'appeared the word "PANTI-SOCRACY, Quarto." Who much deplores the loss of that quarto? Who laments as a privation to posterity the non-completion of a 'Book on Morals in answer to Godwin,' a 'Treatise on the Corn Laws,' or on 'The Principles of Population'? Even the only work among the eighteen that advanced somewhat beyond the land of dreams, viz., a 'Translation of the Modern Latin Poets,' in two volumes, it seems to us that Coleridge showed his good sense 'in putting off.' It is with a shudder that we find among these eighteen projects

of prospective labour an idea of 'finishing Christabel'; finishing 'Christabel' in the way in which Coleridge himself tells us he projected its finish, viz., to adapt it to the taste of the day; bring it into closer resemblance, we presume, to the 'Lay of the Last Minstrel.' What truly critical friend of Coleridge would not have implored him to desist from such design! 'Christabel' in itself is as unique and matchless as a torso of Phidian art. Who wants the torso completed 'to suit the taste of the day'? It is as a fragment that 'Christabel' will be an eternal study to poets contemplating lyrical narrative. Had it been completed, to vie with the 'Last Minstrel,' Coleridge would have resigned his own superiority of melody, expression, and form, for a very hazardous comparison with Scott in the construction of metrical fable attuned to the popular ear. But, groans Mr. Joseph Cottle, and many deeper-mouthed than Mr. Joseph Cottle have 'barked back' the groan — 'How much it is to be deplored that one whose views were so enlarged as those of Mr. Coleridge, and his conceptions so Miltonic, did not, like his great prototype (Milton), concentrate all his energies so as to produce some one august poetical work which should become the glory of his country.' As in this choragic groan may be heard a chorus of groans irrational, let us hear, from the Man of genius groaned at, his own idea of this one august poetical work on which his energies should have been concentrated, and for which, therefore, we should have lost the all over which these energies were dispersed. Coleridge himself tells us in a letter to Cottle that which he meant by an august poetical work. He says, 'I should not think of devoting less than twenty years to an epic poem; ten years to collect my materials, and warm my mind with universal science. I would be a tolerable mathematician. I would thoroughly understand Mechanics, Hydrostatics, Optics, and Astronomy; Botany, Metallurgy, Fossilism, Chemistry, Geology, Anatomy, Medicine; then the minds of men in all travels, voyages, and histories. So would I spend ten years; the next five in the composition of the poem, and the five last in the correction of it.' Lives there a true poet or a sound-judging critic who could form any sanguine notion of an epic poem thus conceived *de omni scibili*? Robert Hall said of Dr. Kippis, 'He put so many books on the top of his head that he crushed out his brains.' Would the brain of mortal poet bear for ten years the weight of so many sciences, and not feel the poetry

crushed out of it? Where is the chance that a man should end as a Milton who starts as a Newton? That a large flame requires a large fuel we need no philosopher to tell us. A poet who would grasp the largest form of poetry (viz., the Dramatic or the Epic) should have the largest amount of knowledge; granted. But the largest form of poetry excludes, except as auxiliary ornament, the aids of positive science. The reason is perfectly clear. Poetry is an art, and as an art it deals with types unalterable and imperishable; it deals with human nature in its cardinal passions and everlasting aspirations. But science differs from art in being essentially progressive — alterable from year to year. In hydrostatics, botany, metallurgy, medicine, all our knowledge is so capricious and transitory that an encyclopædia treating on such subjects is out of date if it be ten years old. There are no revised editions of pictures and statues and works of fiction when the mind that created them has passed from earth. The fuel required for the flame of poetry is unquestionably knowledge — knowledge of the human heart — knowledge of passion and sorrow and joy — of aspiration and abasement — of vice and virtue — of good and evil. In Coleridge's programme of study for an epic poem, all this knowledge is left out. And if we now look critically at such examples as he has left us of his practical power to construct artistic fable in the wholeness and unity of completed form, we must acknowledge it was precisely that power which he wanted, and in which no study of truth through physical science, 'of men's minds through travels, voyages, and histories,' and no mastery of musical language and felicitous expression, could have supplied his inherent defect. For we have his tragedies finished *ad unguem* according to his notions of tragedy; and while these elaborated performances, whatever their detached beauties, which we would rather reverentially magnify than churlishly depreciate, suffice to show that Coleridge wanted the indispensable elements of dramatic construction, they no less convincingly show that he would have failed still more in the achievement of epic. That which he lacks is not light, but fire. He has no prolonged sustinment of passion; he can delight the imagination, he cannot enthral the heart. Had he absorbed into the laboratory of his brain all the lore contained on the shelves of the British Museum and the lost library of Alexandria, it could never have been reproduced in the form of such Dramas as, no matter on what

principle of art they are constructed — whether on those conceived by Shakespeare, or on those accepted by Corneille, — still hold unlettered audiences under the master-spell of pity or of terror — nor in such creations of epic fable as represent in every human community the heroic archetypes of our common race.

We see, then, no cause for regret that Coleridge did not devote twenty years of his life to manufacture 'one august poetical work' out of such raw materials as the positive sciences, and books of history, voyages, and travels. Neither do we grieve with less poetical mourners over the embryos of philosophies unborn, that Coleridge did not concentrate the rays of an intellect so widely diffused upon some new History of the Human Mind, or gather into a completed system all his lore in English divinity, and all his speculative deductions from German metaphysics.

For works necessitating a long-continued patience, habits of methodical arrangement, a clear disentanglement of the complicated skein of contradictory opinions in various sects and schools — with a constant and calm perception of the sage's own theory, and a lucid and forcible mode of rendering that theory intelligible to others — we have no reason to suppose that Coleridge had the requisite gifts. He wanted, perhaps, less the primary than the secondary qualifications which we find in the Philosopher who can put his whole mind into a single system, and put his whole system into a single book.

We must be contented to take even men of genius as they are, and recognize the fact that, if they had possessed the qualities they lack, it would have been to destroy or to neutralize the qualities they possess. It is enough for us that, with all his asserted indolence, Coleridge has left behind him so goodly an array of volumes, rich with such diversified spoils — enough that we retain in so many reminiscences of his conversation, in so large a remnant of his familiar correspondence, the adequate record of a Mind that 'has enriched the blood of the world,' vital in its influence through age-long generations, alike upon sage and poet, — kindling new conceptions of beauty, prompting new guesses into truth.

Goethe has been likened to a cupola lighted from below. Coleridge may rather be compared to a pharos, in which the light is placed on the summit, leaving the shadow of the tower which it crowns stretched at length on the ground immediately below. But afar, where the ships move through

ocean, the shadow is invisible, the tower itself disappears, nothing is seen but the light.

Reluctantly we close the pleasant retrospect of 'Charles Lamb and some of his Companions,' to which, first invited by Serjeant Talfourd, we have been re-attracted by the kindred genius of Mr. Procter. In his recent biography of Lamb, the Poet of 'Marcian Colonna' has revived the sense of our own obligations to himself —

'For heavenly tunes piped through an alien flute;'

(*Lamb's verses to the Author of Poems published under the name of Barry Cornwall.*)

while in his simple and touching narrative

he has added much of endearing interest to our knowledge of the exquisite writer whom he loves to honour.

In listening as it were to the uttered thoughts of a spirit so gently attuned as that of 'Elia,' so humane, yet so elevating, the mind —

'tired
Of controversy where no end appears,'

feels that sense of repose, which, to quote the words of 'Elia' himself, steals over him

'whom the Sabbath bells salute,
Sudden; his heart awakes, his ears drink in
The cheering music; his relenting soul
Years after all the joys of social life,
And softens with the love of human kind.'

BET SUGAR IN ILLINOIS.—A report recently made to the directors of the Illinois Central Railroad Company by Mr. R. W. Bender, gives an interesting account of the first beet sugar manufactory in Illinois. A German company began operations in 1866 by planting four hundred acres of land in Livingston County, mostly fresh prairie, from which they have raised a crop of more than four thousand tons of fine beets, at a cost, according to their own estimate, of less than four dollars per ton. The beets are of the "White Silesian" and "Imperial" varieties, and both have done well. At the time of harvest the roots from all parts of their farm were tested, and the juice was found to contain from nine to thirteen and one-half per cent. of sugar—the average of all the tests showing twelve per cent.

The quality of the beets tested would yield seven and one-third per cent. of raw sugar, in color equal to fair refining sugar, but intrinsically much superior—or it would yield five and one-half per cent. of sugar equal in every respect to New York refined "B." The beets raised, if successfully and rapidly worked, would have produced not less than four hundred and fifty thousand pounds of refined sugar.

In consequence of accidents to machinery, and other causes, the work has been delayed for several months, but it has recently been resumed with great success. Mr. Bender says:

"The capacity of the manufactory is estimated to be equal to fifty tons of beets per day. During the few days the works have been in operation, they have turned out about eight-

teen thousand pounds of sugar (two-thirds of which was equal to New York refined B), which was the product of an unknown quantity of beet roots, as I found they had not kept any record of the quantity brought from the pits to the factory. The pulp was not watered on the centrifugals, so as to save evaporation. The juice was boiled blank and placed in large tanks to crystallize. This course was mainly taken to economize the use of steam. The first product granulated in twenty-four hours, and the second in three days, so as to go in centrifugal machines. I could see nothing of the third product. I very much regret that the Messrs. Gernert could not give me an accurate account of the cost of cultivating their beets; the estimate, as I have already said, was less than four dollars per ton. It is also to be regretted that no account of the weight of beets taken to the factory was kept, although any calculation made on that basis would be unfair, considering the irregular operations at the factory, and the deterioration of the saccharine properties of the roots from long delay in working.

"The result of my investigations, added to my previous knowledge of the subject, more than ever confirms my belief in the speedy and successful development of this branch of agricultural industry. And this feeling is already widely entertained through the West, where suitable lands and abundance of fuel can be had at low prices in the immediate vicinity of a ready market."

This experiment is the beginning of an industry which may become highly important.—*New York Evening Post.*